

## Winnipeg Sun Article

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JOHN WOODS SUN

Coutu showed off her prize-winning pizza yesterday, along with the secret of its success.

# Brewed up prize pizza

## Moosehead beer secret ingredient

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Everyone knows there's nothing better than beer and pizza, but a Winnipeg restaurant owner has found a patriotic way to kick things up a notch.

Her award-winning secret strategy?

Putting the beer in the pizza.

Diana Coutu, co-owner of Diana's Gourmet Pizzeria on St. Mary's Road, was recently chosen the 2005 Pizza Chef of the Year by *Canadian Pizza Magazine*.

Contest entrants had to make three different dishes using a set list of ingredients but were allowed to add five secret ingredients of their own.

Coutu chose Moosehead beer, incorporating the brew into not just her pizza crust but also a dessert.

She then spent about two weeks making practice recipes and test batches and forcing her staff to sample all the experimental results.

After submitting her efforts to the magazine, she was chosen as one of three finalists whose recipes were recreated at the Culinary Institute in Niagara Falls.

Maybe it was the beer talking, but the judges chose Coutu.

"I knew I wanted to use Moosehead in my crust, because it would give it a lot of punch," she said. "Afterwards, I was told my recipes were 'over the top.'"

Coutu's win will soon see her square off against the American champion at the International Pizza Expo in Las Vegas, where she'll have an hour and a half to pull off all three recipes from scratch in an *Iron Chef*-style stage competition.

She's well aware of the symmetry in a showdown between Canucks and Yanks, where good old Canadian beer might be the deciding factor.

### Making history

For their part, the folks at Moosehead seem pleased as punch to know their product might soon help make pizza history.

To repay her, they're helping to publicize her winning entry.

"It was a big surprise to us that it's being used in Canada's best pizza," said a Moosehead rep yesterday, noting the company is helping to boost Coutu's profile by hooking her up with local media outlets. "But obviously we're thrilled."

The International Pizza Expo runs from March 29 to April 1, 2005.