



Elevate Gather & Graze Member Insights Exchange
September 23 – 24, 2206 | Costa Mesa, CA

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

5:00pm **SoCal Dine Arounds**

On this tour where a delicious dinner meets community connection, we'll taste our way through some of the area's standout spots.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

8:15am **Breakfast and Small Group Tours**

Enjoy breakfast while small groups rotate through a tour of the El Pollo Loco office.

9:00am **From Insight to Ideation: Building Better Innovation Sessions**

This session explores how to design and facilitate innovation sessions that turn market intelligence into actionable ideas. The session will highlight how consumer insights, menu trends, and category data can be used to spark creativity, align stakeholders, and pressure-test opportunities before they move into development. Attendees will learn how structured ideation, data-backed inspiration, and collaborative frameworks can help teams uncover whitespace, prioritize concepts, and build stronger innovation pipelines.

Presenter: **Kelly Dykhuizen** (VP, Client Experience, Datassential)

9:45am **Fueling Fire-Grilled Growth: How El Pollo Loco Turns Menu Innovation into Brand Momentum**

From leveraging its fire-grilled chicken equity to identifying emerging flavor and format opportunities, the presentation will explore how El Pollo Loco builds a menu pipeline that attracts new guests, deepens loyalty, and stays true to the brand's roots. Attendees will gain insight into how strategic menu innovation can drive differentiation in a competitive restaurant landscape while balancing speed, value, and execution across the system.

Presenter: **Maggie Reyna** (VP, Menu Strategy & Calendar, El Pollo Loco)

Rene Piscioti (Senior Director of Culinary Innovation, El Pollo Loco)

10:30am **Networking Break**

- 11:00am **Guac Against the Clock Workshop**
Avocados fly, limes squeeze, and cilantro gets dramatic in this fast-paced kitchen showdown where bold flavor, data backed instincts, and perfectly timed mashing determine who rises to the top of the dip bowl.
- 12:00pm **Member Panel**
Our expert panel will dish out fresh perspectives, serve up creative solutions, and share how working together turns ordinary ingredients into extraordinary results.
- 12:45pm **Lunch**
Enjoy a casual lunch featuring fresh, flavorful favorites from El Pollo Loco.
- 1:45pm **Program Concludes**