

Loyalty vs. Legacy: Damian Lillard's dream of an NBA Title



T'keyah Grant, ESPN
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After 11 loyal years, point guard Damian Lillard is finally saying "[Farewell](#)" to the city of Portland.

Drafted in 2012, Damian Lillard has spent his entire NBA career thus far, with the Portland Trail Blazers. Since then, the closest the NBA star came to winning the championship was leading the team to the 2019 NBA Western Conference Finals. Despite a seven-year losing streak, Lillard remained loyal to the Portland Trail Blazers, hoping to win an NBA title with the team he felt he owed his career to.

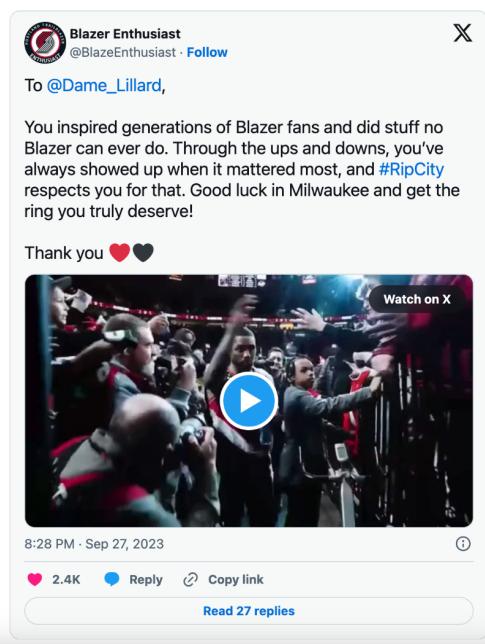
In 2023 however, after not making the NBA playoffs for two years in a row, it became clear to the 33-year-old veteran that remaining in Portland would not win him the NBA title. On July 1, he formally requested a trade.

With a career-high of averaging over 32 points per game, Lillard became the hottest commodity for NBA teams looking to acquire a point guard. On September 27th, it was announced that

Damian Lillard was signed to the Milwaukee Bucks. A team, that won the 2021 NBA Championship and who last year, was the number-one seed in the league.

Lillard will join two-time MVP, Giannis Antetokounmpo, who also values loyalty, remaining with the Bucks since being drafted in 2013. After their 2023 NBA All-Star win, there is no doubt that these two are the most anticipated dynamic duo for the 2023-24 NBA season.

Portland fans are bittersweet, and sad that their star player is leaving the franchise but they are happy that he will have the opportunity to add an NBA title to his legacy.



Damian Lillard, also known as Dame D.O.L.L.A., the rapper, released a “Farewell” song to his Trail Blazer fans after the trade announcement. In it, he says:

“To the fans, man I love you, it’s unconditional. Reasons for me leaving the city’s nothing typical. So it’s imperative not to believe the narrative. Just know that what I left is better than what I inherited.”

He acknowledged his undying love for the city of Portland but explained that like any other NBA player, he’s leaving the franchise in hopes of achieving his goal to win an NBA championship title. As he famously says, ‘It’s Dame Time’.

Lillard will make his first appearance as a Milwaukee Buck when they play their first game of the preseason against the Chicago Bulls on October 8.