



PIZZA RISES IN THE WEST

IT'S OFFICIAL: PIZZA IS THE NEW NIGHT OUT, ESPECIALLY IN **SAN FRANCISCO**, WHERE HAND-STRETCHED PIES HAVE BECOME HAUTE CUISINE. READ 'EM AND EAT—OR MAKE ONE YOURSELF

BY RACHEL LEVIN AND MARGO TRUE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS J. STORY



1 Pizzetta 211 Best Margherita pie

WHAT'S SPECIAL This is the sweetest little restaurant in all of San Francisco, with just four wooden tables inside, a scattering of sidewalk seats, and blankets for bundling up in the fog while you wait beneath a tree strung with white lights. Pizzetta 211 has left people swooning since 1999—long before artisanal pizza was the trend that it is today. **PIE TO TRY** That Margherita—tomato, mozzarella, and basil; adding pepperoni might bring you to tears. **INSIDER TIP** Go for lunch. It's less busy. **\$\$; cash only; 211 23rd Ave., San Francisco; 415/379-9880. -R.L.**



EXTRA LARGE
Keith Freilich turns out tasty East Coast-style pizzas from his tiny storefront.

2 Emilia's Pizzeria New cult favorite

WHAT'S SPECIAL Chef-owner Keith Freilich has tossed dough at some of the best places, including New Jersey's beloved Grimaldi's. His new storefront-of-a-parlor has folks clamoring for his thin, stretchy crust. **PIE TO TRY** There's only one—the oversize Margherita with mozzarella, basil, and fresh tomato sauce—followed by a shower of parmesan when it comes out of the gas oven. If you must gild the lily, choose from the brief list of toppings. **INSIDER TIP** You have to be fast; whenever the dough runs out, Freilich closes. Check Twitter for updates. \$; cash only; closed Sun–Mon; 2995 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley; 510/704-1794. –JAN NEWBERRY

3 Flour + Water

WHAT'S SPECIAL This noisy new restaurant has everyone trekking to an otherwise abandoned corner of the Mission, for dough peppered with flavor from the fire, dressed with whip-fresh tomato sauce and worthy of worship. **PIE TO TRY** The blistered radicchio with chiles and pancetta. **INSIDER TIP** When they unlock the door at 5:30, be there to snag a chair at the bar built from reclaimed redwood. \$\$; 2401 Harrison St., San Francisco; 415/826-7000.

–CHRISTINE RICHARD

4 Tony's Pizza Napoletana

WHAT'S SPECIAL Tony Gemignani is the only American winner of the World Pizza Cup in Naples, and he knows how to flaunt it. But we'll stomach the oversize menus trumpeting his awards, for the American-, Italian-, Neapolitan-, Roman-, and Sicilian-style pies coming out of his four ovens. **PIE TO TRY** The Margherita is the house specialty. Gemignani always makes 73 a day—no more, no fewer. **INSIDER TIP** Four words: deep-fried meatball calzone. \$\$; closed Mon–Tue; 1570 Stockton St., San Francisco; 415/835-9888. –AMY MACHNAK

5 Pizzeria Picco

WHAT'S SPECIAL Ingredients come from local farms, mozz is hand-pulled in-house, and you can get peppery arugula salad piled on any pizza. Plus, crusts are exceptionally flavorful. Mario Batali, no slouch in the pizza department, once declared Picco's the best pizza in the country. **PIE TO TRY** The Cannondale, with homemade sausage and roasted red peppers and red onions. **INSIDER TIP** Pick up the flash-frozen to-go pizzas and reheat them at home (order 24 hours ahead). \$\$; 316 Magnolia Ave., Larkspur, CA; 415/945-8900. –M.T.

THE FRESHEST TOPPINGS

“THE PRODUCE IS AMAZING IN SAN FRANCISCO, MAYBE EVEN BETTER THAN IN ITALY. AND THE FOG IS GREAT FOR DOUGH”

—NYC PIZZA MASTER ANTHONY MANGIERI, WHO’S MOVING HIS FAMED UNA PIZZA NAPOLETANA TO SAN FRANCISCO THIS SPRING

Seasonal spin Our favorite combos

Rosemary
Pecorino
Pine nuts

Oysters
Leeks
Cream
Herbs

Roasted yam
Fried sage
Brown butter

Chanterelles
Fontina
Shallots

Chicken
Walnut pesto
Black olives

Anchovies
Capers
Chiles

Artichokes
Lemon
Olives
Parmesan

Potatoes
Pancetta
Fontina
Rosemary

TOP TREND

Cracking a farm-fresh egg on the pizza—just before it’s pulled from the oven—gives it an irresistible oozy oomph. But egg goes only with certain ingredients, like potato or nettle, warns Gialina’s Sharon Ardiana, a self-proclaimed “egg advocate” whose menu includes the option of adding a \$2 egg from Mariquita Farm. “Some people are like, ‘Ew, egg.’ But then they try it and they’re sold.”



6

Pizzeria Delfina

Tastiest crust

WHAT'S SPECIAL Craig Stoll elevated the pizza scene in San Francisco when he opened his first to-die-for pizzeria in 2005. Lines formed out the door for his thin-crust pies baked at 770° in a gas-fired brick oven. He opened a second location in 2008, with a third—a pop-up-style stall—slated to open this summer in Hayes Valley. **PIE TO TRY** The broccoli rabe—a thing of blistered beauty topped with the leafy green from Star Route Farms, plus black olives, fresh mozz, cacio-cavallo cheese straight from Campania, and just enough red chile flakes. **INSIDER TIP** If the wait is unbearable, grab a ball of dough for \$3.50 and re-create the magic at home. \$\$; two San Francisco locations: 3611 18th St. (415/437-6800) and 2406 California St. (415/440-1189). —R.L.



“I LEFT FINE DINING TO MAKE PIZZA. PIZZA IS MORE APPROACHABLE, MORE DEMOCRATIC. IT’S SOMETHING EVERYONE CAN EAT AND UNDERSTAND—AND, LIKE ME, OBSESS OVER” —ANTHONY STRONG, PIZZAIOLO AT PIZZERIA DELFINA



MAKE PIZZA LIKE A PRO

Pizzeria Delfina's dough, adapted for baking in a home oven, is the best we've ever tried—smooth and supple. The secret lies in how you stretch it. Pizzaiolo Anthony Strong demonstrates, below right.

Delfina's broccoli rabe pizza

MAKES 3 (12-in.) pizzas, plus dough for 3 more pizzas **TIME** About 2 hours, plus rising time **NOTE** You can use regular flour, but for a truly awesome crust, go for high-protein Italian "00" (fine-milled) flour.

DOUGH

1 tsp. fresh yeast

1½ tsp. extra-virgin olive oil

1 lb., 14 oz. (about 6 cups) "00" pizza flour, preferably Caputo*, or all-purpose flour

3 tbsp. kosher salt

TOPPING

10 oz. fresh mozzarella packed in liquid

⅓ cup liquid from mozzarella container

¼ cup shredded caciocavallo or parmesan cheese

¼ cup each heavy cream and buttermilk

½ tsp. kosher salt, divided

1 lb. broccoli rabe (about 1 large bunch)

2 garlic cloves, well smashed

4 tbsp. olive oil

About ¼ tsp. red chile flakes

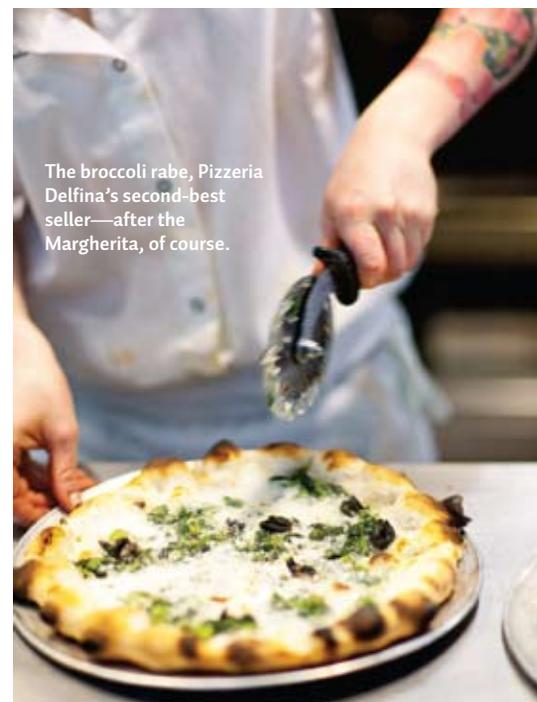
Freshly ground black pepper

⅓ cup oil-cured black olives (soaked in water and drained if salty), pitted and torn in half

Extra-virgin olive oil for drizzling

MAKE DOUGH

1. Put yeast, oil, and 2 cups plus 1 tbsp. cold tap water in bowl of a stand mixer and mix, using dough hook, on lowest speed 5 minutes, or until yeast has completely dissolved. Add flour and mix another 8 minutes.
2. Cover bowl loosely with a dampened towel and let dough rise 20 minutes.
3. Add salt and mix on low speed until incorporated and dissolved, 7 minutes.
4. Turn dough onto a lightly floured work surface and cut into 6 equal portions. Roll each into a tight ball. Place on a lightly floured tray.
5. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and let rise at least 4 hours at warm room temperature. Dough balls have risen properly when they are soft, pillowy, and full of air.



The broccoli rabe, Pizzeria Delfina's second-best seller—after the Margherita, of course.



MAKE TOPPING

6. With flat side of a chef's knife, mash a third of the mozzarella into a pulverized mass. Dice remaining mozzarella into ½-in. cubes. In a medium bowl, mix both mozzarellas with mozzarella liquid, shredded cheese, cream, and buttermilk. Season with ¼ tsp. salt.
7. Cut broccoli rabe into 1-in. sections, discarding tough lower stems.
8. In a large frying pan over very low heat, cook garlic in oil, stirring often, until transparent, about 5 minutes. Add chile flakes and toast for a second, then add broccoli rabe. Stir in remaining ¼ tsp. salt and several grinds of pepper.
9. Crank heat to medium-high and cook broccoli rabe, stirring, until liquid starts to evaporate and broccoli rabe is tender-crisp, 5 to 7 minutes.

MAKE PIZZA

10. Heat a pizza stone or baking sheet on lowest rack of oven at 550° (or as high as oven will go), at least 30 minutes.
 11. Set 1 dough ball on a well-floured pizza peel or baking sheet and stretch into an 11- to 12-in. circle (see photos above).
 12. Spread about ⅔ cup cheese mixture over dough. Top with ½ cup broccoli rabe, a pinch of chile flakes, and 2 tbsp. olives.
 13. Shove pizza onto stone. Bake 5 to 6 minutes, or until puffy and browned. Drizzle with oil. Repeat with 2 dough balls and toppings (top remaining 3 differently or freeze).
- Make ahead:* Chill dough balls overnight or freeze up to 2 weeks (let come to room temperature before stretching).
- *Find at well-stocked grocery stores and Italian markets.

PER ¼ TOPPED PIZZA 319 CAL., 44% (140 CAL.) FROM FAT; 12 G PROTEIN; 16 G FAT (6.1 G SAT.); 29 G CARBO (0.9 G FIBER); 1,121 MG SODIUM; 34 MG CHOL.



7

Gialina

WHAT'S SPECIAL Chef-owner Sharon Ardiana's ethereally thin crusts adorned with local ingredients like Niman Ranch pork belly have put this neighborhood spot on the national radar. **PIE TO TRY** Wild nettles with pancetta, aged provolone, mushrooms, and slivers of red onion.

INSIDER TIP Save room for dessert: cappuccino Italian ice and a salty-sweet dessert pizza, spread with Nutella. \$\$; 2842 Diamond St., San Francisco; 415/239-8500. -R.L.

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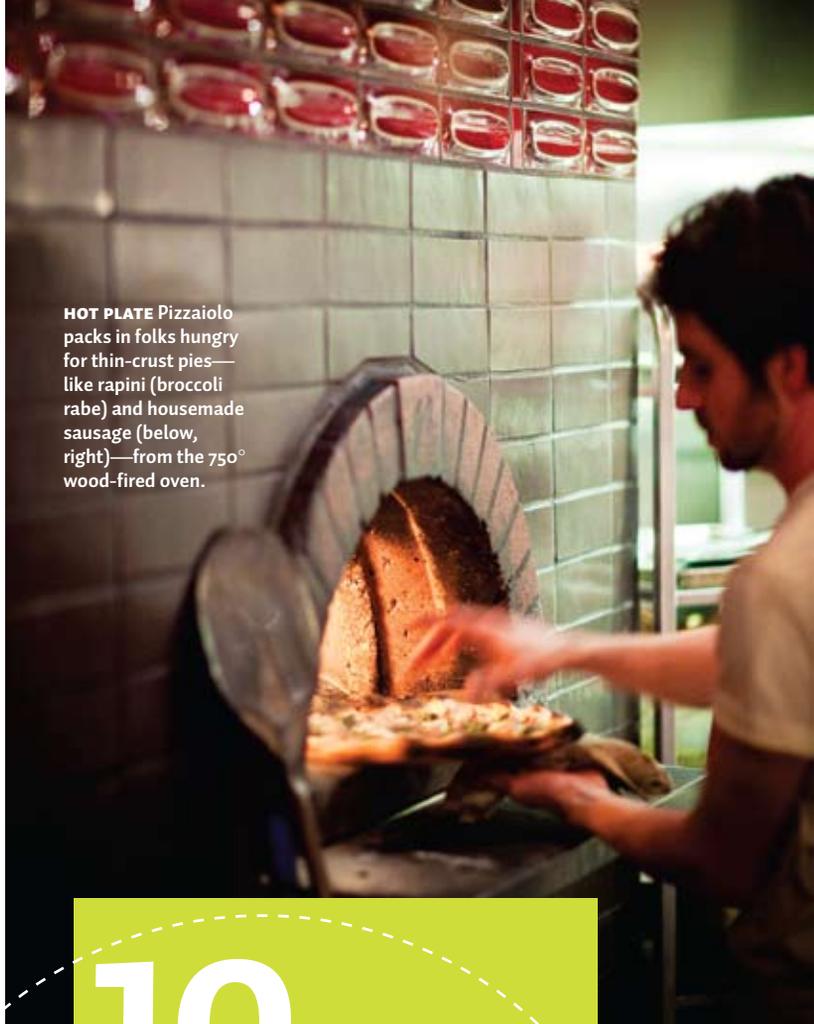
Pulcinella

WHAT'S SPECIAL Over-the-top Italian-ness, with a Bay of Naples mural, a small band playing "O Sole Mio," flirtatious service—but with pizza cred. Owner Luigi Pucci hails from the Caputo family, makers of Italy's premium pizza flour. **PIE TO TRY** Soft, creamy eggplant and zucchini slices fried and scattered over a crust made with that peerless flour. **INSIDER TIP** You can actually make reservations. \$\$; closed Mon; 641 Vallejo St., San Francisco; 415/829-7312. -M.T.

9

Howie's Artisan Pizza

WHAT'S SPECIAL Finally, South Bay suburbanites have an artisanal pizza place they can call their own. Welcome Howie's, which opened in November with a sleek bamboo-wood interior, a gas-fired oven, puffy-edged crusts, and a commitment to local, seasonal ingredients—even a website that aims to educate. **PIE TO TRY** The housemade pancetta, red onion, and mozzarella, spiked with red chiles. \$; 855 El Camino Real, Ste. 60, Palo Alto, CA; 650/327-4992. -R.L.



HOT PLATE Pizzaiolo packs in folks hungry for thin-crust pies—like rapini (broccoli rabe) and housemade sausage (below, right)—from the 750° wood-fired oven.

10

Pizzaiolo Best atmosphere

WHAT'S SPECIAL Pizzaiolo has been an Oakland classic since Charlie Hallowell quit the Chez Panisse kitchen to create this airy, exposed-brick restaurant. People pile in for the housemade pastas, famous meatballs—and pizzas pulled from the wood-fired oven. His new Oakland pizza spot, Boot and Shoe Shine Service (\$\$; closed Sun–Mon; 510/763-2668), opened in December and is already a hit. **PIE TO TRY** The smoky Monterey Bay squid, with slightly charred cherry tomatoes and garlicky aioli. **INSIDER TIP** Doors open at 8 a.m. for doughnuts (cross your fingers for custard-filled with chocolate icing) and Blue Bottle Coffee. \$\$; closed Sun; 5008 Telegraph Ave., Oakland; 510/652-4888. -LISA TROTTIER

“FIVE YEARS AGO, NO ONE CONSIDERED SAN FRANCISCO A PIZZA TOWN—NOW IT’S BOOMING. WHINY NEW YORK EXPATS HAVE TO SHUT UP” —ADAM KUBAN OF THE MANHATTAN-BASED BLOG SLICE





RIGHT: JEFFERY CROSS (7); FOOD STYLING: KAREN SHINTO

A slice of the West 10 more pies we're craving now, from Phoenix to Seattle



PHOENIX

Pizzeria Bianco

James Beard award-winning chef Chris Bianco smokes his own fresh mozzarella and mans the wood-burning oven for guests who know to queue up at 3:30 for the 5 p.m. opening.

TRY The Wiseguy, with roasted onions, that mozz, and fennel sausage. \$\$\$; closed Sun–Mon; 623 E. Adams St.; 602/258-8300. —**EDIE JAROLIM**



LOS ANGELES

Pizzeria Mozza

The fennel sausage is made in-house; the oregano is dried whole-branch from Sicily. But the real secret ingredient is Nancy Silverton, who has created the perfect pizza crust.

TRY Goat cheese, leeks, scallions, and bacon. **TIP** Can't get a reservation? Now there's Mozza 2 Go. \$\$\$; 641 N. Highland Ave.; 323/297-0101.

—**CHRIS RYAN**

COSTA MESA, CA

Pizzeria Ortica

It's all about the 300-year-old *biga* (starter dough) that chef Steve Samson and pizzaiolo Zach Pollack liberated from somewhere near Naples. **TRY** The *guanciale*, with fresh ricotta, slivered scallions, and fennel pollen. \$\$; closed Sun; 650 Anton Blvd.; 714/445-4900.

—**DAVID LANSING**



HENDERSON, NV

Settebello Pizzeria Napoletana

You won't find pepperoni, and you'll have to tear the slices yourself, but it's the most authentic pizza in the Vegas area.

TRY Quattro Stagioni. \$; 140 S. Green Valley Pkwy.; 702/222-3556.

—**HEIDI KNAPP RINELLA**



DENVER

Marco's Coal-Fired Pizzeria

The only parlor in Colorado to have its Naples-style pizza certified authentic by Italy's Verace Pizza Napoletana. **TRY** The Toscana, with grape tomatoes, arugula,

prosciutto di Parma, and fresh mozzarella. \$\$; 2129 Larimer St.; 303/296-7000.

—**AMANDA M. FAISON**



OREM, UT

Pizzeria Seven Twelve

Wood-fired pizza in a town unaccustomed to such artisanal food. **TRY** Thin-sliced eggplant with capers, sautéed red onions, and fresh ricotta.

\$\$; closed Sun; 320 S. State St.; 801/623-6712.

—**MARY BROWN MALOUF**



PORTLAND

Ken's Artisan Pizza

A corner spot with a cult following that churns out thin-crust Neapolitan pies dressed in toppings like fresh mozzarella and San Daniele prosciutto, the Cadillac of cured ham.

TRY The classic Margherita with fresh arugula. \$\$; closed Sun–Mon; 304 S.E. 28th Ave.; 503/517-9951.

—**IVY MANNING**

Tastebud

Chef-owner Mark Doxtader has been firing up his mobile

wood-burning oven at farmers' markets for years. Now, say hello to his storefront. **TRY** Roasted wild mushrooms, kale pesto, and fresh mozzarella. \$\$\$; closed Mon–Tue; 3220 S.E. Milwaukie Ave.; 503/234-0330. —**I.M.**



SEATTLE

Delancey

A new neighborhood parlor decorated with chairs from an old bowling alley and photos by co-owner Molly Wizenberg (aka the popular Orangette blogger). The pizza has a thin, charred crust good enough to eat on its own—but is even better topped with uncooked tomato sauce and spicy Padrón peppers.

TRY The seasonal specialty. \$\$; closed Mon–Tue; 1415 N.W. 70th St.; 206/838-1960.

—**REBEKAH DENN**

Serious Pie

Arguably the most beloved restaurant in celeb chef Tom Douglas's stable. The crust is light, with a puffy edge and yeasty chew. Meats are cured in-house.

TRY The buffalo mozzarella with San Marzano tomatoes. \$\$; 316 Virginia St.; 206/838-7388. —**R.D.**



RIGHT: JEFFERY CROSS (S); FOOD STYLING: KAREN SHINTO

A slice of the West 10 more pies we're craving now, from Los Angeles to Seattle



L.A. AREA

Antica Pizzeria

This is the real deal: authentic Neapolitan pizza that sticks strictly to tradition (don't let the mall location fool you).

TRY The Pizza del Carcerato, or Prisoner, a Margherita with ricotta cheese hidden in the crust. \$; 13455 Maxella Ave., Marina del Rey; 310/577-8182.

—KATIE TAMONY

Pizzeria Mozza

The fennel sausage is made in-house; the oregano is dried whole-branch from Sicily. But the real secret ingredient is Nancy Silverton, who has created the perfect pizza crust.

TRY Goat cheese, leeks, scallions, and bacon. **TIP** Hit Mozza 2 Go (6610 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles; 323/297-1130), which opened in summer '09. \$\$; 641 N. Highland Ave., Los Angeles; 323/297-0101.

—CHRIS RYAN

Tomato Pie

It's an East Coast-style pizza joint in Silver Lake, where you can buy a premium-quality slice and a soda for

less than \$5. The crust is crispy-chewy superb. **TRY** The Grandma, a version of the classic Margherita, with tomatoes crushed by hand and pecorino romano on the rim. \$; 2457 Hyperion Ave., Los Angeles; 323/661-6474. —K.T.

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HENDERSON, NV

Settebello Pizzeria Napoletana

You won't find pepperoni, and you'll have to tear the slices yourself, but this is the most authentic pizza in the Vegas area. **TRY** Quattro Stagioni, divided into four roasted toppings. \$; 140 S. Green Valley Pkwy.; 702/222-3556.

—HEIDI KNAPP RINELLA



PORTLAND

Ken's Artisan Pizza

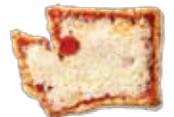
A corner spot with a cult following that churns out thin-crust Neapolitan pies dressed in toppings like handmade mozzarella and San Daniele prosciutto, the Cadillac of cured ham. **TRY** The classic Margherita with fresh arugula. \$\$; closed Sun–Mon; 304 S.E. 28th Ave.; 503/517-9951.

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