



CONTACT: Cara Schneider
(215) 599-0789, cara@visitphilly.com
Jenea Robinson
(215) 599-2291, jenea@visitphilly.com
Tweet Us: [@visitphillyPR](https://twitter.com/visitphillyPR)

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PHILLY PIZZA PLEASES EVERY PALATE *The Region's Pizzerias Have Never Been So Bountiful Or So Diverse*

PHILADELPHIA, July 26, 2017 – Philadelphia has earned some serious pizza cred in recent years. Not only is this city home to a combo pizza museum and restaurant (**Pizza Brain**), an artisan pizza truck (**Pitruco**) and, it's also a proving ground for the idea that this traditional food can be reinvented in infinite ways. Whether it's a straightforward but studious Neapolitan round, a floppy tri-corner slice with cheese to spare or a newfangled pie laden with carefully sourced ingredients, there is a pizza for every pie lover's predilection. Here's a sampling of the region's cheesiest, crispiest riches:

Artisan Pizza:

True artisan pizza is hand-made by *pizzaioli*, pizza-focused chefs who are dedicated to their craft and carefully source their ingredients. Often—but not always—using the traditional Neapolitan style as a starting point, these chefs reinvent the genre with remarkable toppings, personal flourishes and mix and match styles that produce a diverse pizza experience.

- **Barbuzzo** – Pizza may not be the sole focus at this Mediterranean wine bar in Midtown Village, but there's no denying the lure of Chef Marcie Turney's famed *asparago* pie, with secret white sauce, fior di latte, locally cured guanciale and truffled farm egg. Seasonal options such as the *Fico* (figs, gorgonzola, arugula, prosciutto and walnuts) showcase her mastery of ingredients. 110 S. 13th Street, (215) 546-9300, barbuzzo.com
- **La Porta** – Chef Peter McAndrews' Media restaurant produces its own brand of pizza, a thin charred crust with a structured bite. One example of his signature style: the "Delcosanostra," made with mushrooms, roasted chicken, bacon jam, smoked mozzarella and a special Italian barbecue sauce. 1192 N. Middletown Road, Media, (610) 358-5104, laportarestaurant.com
- **Osteria** – Chef Marc Vetri's first pizza-centric establishment set a new standard for local pizzaioli. This elegant eatery serves up wood-fired *tradizionali* pies topped with interesting flavor combinations, like octopus and smoked mozzarella or mortadella with Sicilian pistachio pesto. 640 N. Broad Street, (215) 763-0920, osteriaphilly.com
- **Pizza Brain** – The world's first pizza museum and shop showcases hundreds of pop culture pizza artifacts in rotation at its funky Fishtown headquarters. The pies feature sustainably sourced toppings framed with zany names such as the "Bob Shieldsmoose," which brings together brisket, Maytag blue cheese and horseradish. 2313 Frankford Avenue, (215) 291-2965, pizzabrain.org
- **Pizza Dads** – A new Brewerytown-based offshoot of Pizza Brain, Pizza Dads also possesses the quirky sense of humor of its older sibling, with the serious pies to back it up. One standout is the Alana, a red sauce-and-mozzarella pie layered with prosciutto cotto, sliced pineapple and Grana Padano cheese. 2843 Girard Avenue, (215) 763-DADS (3237), pizzabrain.org/pizza-dads

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- **Rione** – This Italian-owned Center City newcomer specializes in *pizza al taglio*, the light and crispy square slice style native to Rome. Styles rotate daily, running the gamut from staunchly traditional (the classic *Margherita* with nothing but red sauce, mozzarella, basil and extra virgin olive oil) to the unexpected (a thinly sliced white potato pie with rosemary and sausage). 102 S. 21st Street, (215) 575-9075, rionepizza.com

New-School & Hybrid Pies:

Some of the most interesting pizza (and pizza-adjacent, e.g., flatbread) creations come out of kitchens that rethink the traditional sauce-and-cheese rules. The city's new-school and hybrid pizzas throw ancient recipes aside and embrace a more unorthodox approach.

- **&pizza** – A chain with locations from Washington, DC to New York City, the stylish &pizza offers both curated menu items (the fungi-loving “Moonstruck,” loaded with mushrooms, garlicky ricotta and goat cheese) and the option to construct your own pie, down to the dough (traditional, ancient grain, gluten-free), sauce, cheese and toppings. 1430 Walnut Street, (215) 609-4758, andpizza.com
- **Blackbird** – As Philadelphia's only full-on vegan pizzeria, this casual Society Hill spot uses ingredients such as seitan sausage, Daiya non-dairy cheese and house-smoked tofu to cover its chewy crusts and sate non-meat-eating appetites. 507 S. 6th Street, (215) 625-6660, blackbirdpizzeria.com
- **Bocconcini** – This popular Midtown Village bring-your-own-bottle (BYOB) spot cranks out classic antipasti and house-made pastas, but they also offer a tight menu of 10-inch house pies. Adventurous eaters often request “The Kitchen Sink”—for which the cooks will whip up a special off-menu pizza, toppings entirely up to them, upon request. 1334 Pine Street, (215) 545-2482, boccoonline.com
- **Cinder** – An extensive selection of artisan sour ales and ciders may be the most alluring aspect of Cinder's offerings at first glance, but the Center City spot can also crank out a killer pie. They mix traditional toppings with personality-driven offerings, like an al pastor pizza dressed up like the classic Mexican pork-and-pineapple taco. 1500 Locust Street, (267) 761-5582, cinderphilly.com
- **City Tap House** – The brick-oven creations at the multi-location City Tap House veer into unusual and delicious territory: Thin crusts come topped with combinations such as truffled honey, pistachio pesto and goat cheese; or prosciutto, blue cheese, orange-fig jam and arugula. 2 Logan Square, (215) 587-9040, citytaphouselogan.com; 39th & Walnut Streets, (215) 662-0105, citytaphouseucity.com
- **Earth Bread + Brewery** – At this Mt. Airy favorite, the mozzarella is made daily in house and the oven is hand-built. Diners wash down their Nashville Hot Chicken or Vietnam Veggie flatbreads with made-on-premises beer. 7136 Germantown Avenue, (215) 242-6666, earthbreadbrewery.com
- **Medusa Pizzeria** – Fishtown's Medusa builds its inspired pies from toppings such as Brussels sprouts, Buffalo chicken and even American cheese before baking them in a wood-fired oven for maximum crispness. A Nutella- and cannoli cream-stuffed dessert pizza offers its own sweet reward. 2327 Gaul Street, (215) 644-8383, medusapizza.com

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- **Snap Custom Pizza** – It’s a make-and-take affair at this local mini chain that encourages diners to build their own pies. Toppings such as veal meatballs, balsamic syrup, poblano peppers and herb butter ensure that the result will always be intriguing. 1504 Sansom Street, (215) 568-5000; 6 W. 1st Avenue, Conshohocken, (610) 234-6162; 4 Station Road, Ardmore, (610) 896-4488; 1125 E. Lancaster Avenue, Bryn Mawr, (610) 581-7010; 291 Main Street, Exton, (484) 875-5800; snapcustompizza.com

Old-School Philly Pies:

Long before there were water-filtering, artisan flour-dusting scholars of pizza in the area, there have been corner shops and family-owned parlors making the regional specialty of tomato pie and other local favorites. These pizzas might not hew to centuries-old Italian hydration ratios—but they perform just fine on any taste test.

- **Charlie’s Pizzeria** – Sometimes simple inspirations go a long way. Here, the oven turns out “red top pizza,” a New York-esque pie that adds a dollop of extra red sauce on top. 107 W. Germantown Pike, Norristown, (610) 275-1403, pizzacharlies.com
- **Marra’s** – Open 90 years, this East Passyunk landmark exudes charm and authenticity. The thin-crust pizza, built on the same recipe the owner’s grandparents used, showcases the best of Italian-American traditions with Philly flair. 1734 E. Passyunk Avenue, (215) 463-9249, marrasone.com
- **Penny’s Pizza** – Pizza lovers enter through the back door at the 40-year-old Limerick “speakeasy” Penny’s, which is open Thursday through Sunday. The house specialty: “upside down” pies made with a crispy cornmeal-dusted dough. 68 W. Ridge Pike, Limerick, (610) 489-3636; 180 Mill Road, Suite 4, Oaks, (484) 924-9766, gotcornmeal.com
- **Rosa’s Fresh Pizza** – The quintessential grab-and-go city pizza shop, Rosa’s does a brisk business. The pie is more than solid, but here’s what truly separates them from your average slice-and-a-soda pit stop: Owner Mason Wartman’s unique pay-it-forward system, which encourages patrons to purchase future slices that customers in need can capitalize on anytime they’re hungry. 25 S. 11th Street, (215) 627-6727, rosasfreshpizza.com
- **Santucci’s** – There are no wedge-shaped slices at Santucci’s—just pillowy squares with sauce over cheese, cooked in special pans that grant the dough a one-of-a-kind consistency. Santucci’s original locations populate Northeast Philadelphia; the family more recently brought their addictive pies to Bella Vista and North Broad Street. 4010 Cottman Avenue, (215) 332-4333; 460 W. Street Road, Warminster, (215) 441-9400, santuccis.com; 4050 Woodhaven Road, (215) 281-2900, joesantuccisquarepizza.com; 2313 W. Venango Street, (215) 288-2900; 901 S. 10th Street, (215) 825-5304; 655 N. Broad Street, (267) 639-6014, santuccispizza.com
- **Tacconelli’s** – Diners can order pizza and only pizza at this iconic Port Richmond BYOB, where there’s a (strongly) suggested three-topping limit for the crunchy, thin-crust pies. It’s also advised that prospective patrons call the lauded pizzeria in advance to reserve their dough since it’s made in finite quantities daily. 2604 E. Somerset Street, (215) 425-4983, tacconellispizzeria.com
- **Tony’s Place** – Tomato pie is a proud Philly tradition, and the classic version at this legendary Northeast Philly pizzeria attracts a devoted clientele. Around Valentine’s Day, lovebirds get cozy in Tony’s tiny booths to feast on the specialty—which comes heart-shaped, just once a year. 6300 N. Frankford Avenue, (215) 535-9851, tonysfamoustomatopiemenu.com

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Traditional Neapolitan Pizza:

With American pizza diverging into multiple regional styles and variations, some traditionalists are trying to bring it back to its true Italian origins. These pizzas follow the strict standards of their birthplace: San Marzano tomatoes, high-protein wheat flour and stone ovens fired by wood. The elastic, tender crust should be marked by charring and is typically eaten with a knife and fork.

- **Biga** – A wood-fired oven makes the delicious starting point for the rounds at this sophisticated beer and pizza joint in Bryn Mawr. In addition to classics, the staff also bakes up beautiful inventions like “the Shepard” (garlic béchamel, lamb sausage, spinach, pecorino, arugula, pickled onions). 810 Glenbrook Avenue, Bryn Mawr, (610) 525-4800, restaurantbiga.com
- **Brigantessa** – This South Philly *forneria* makes irrefutable Neapolitan classics like *Margherita* and *marinara*, alongside some seasonally changing pies and off-menu delights. 1520 E. Passyunk Avenue, (267) 318-7341, brigantessaphila.com
- **In Riva** – East Falls’ best-kept secret pays homage to pizza’s beginnings with its wood-fired oven. Between a mean *Margherita* and creative spins such as the mushroom and zucchini pie with truffles and fontina, diners have some tough choices to make. 4116 Ridge Avenue, (215) 438-4848, in-riva.com
- **Mattei Family Pizza** – The first shop of its kind in South Philly’s Point Breeze neighborhood, Mattei specializes in the little-known Molise style of brick-oven pizza that subtly splits the difference between the traditional Neapolitan and American corner shop styles. Traditional and new-school setups populate the menu, making sure there’s a pie for every person. 1260 Point Breeze Avenue, (215) 336-1010, matteifamilypizza.com
- **Nomad Pizza** – Bella Vista’s two-story Nomad cuts top-notch pies at the table to prevent them from getting soggy. A second location in Midtown Village serves Roman-style pizza with toppings like ’nduja sausage and Castelvetrano olives. 611 S. 7th Street, (215) 238-0900; 1305 Locust Street, (215) 644-9287, nomadpizzaco.com
- **Pitruco** – This little red truck is an extra-hot commodity. The mobile pizza oven, which vends all over Philly, produces wonderful 11-inch personal pies made with a characteristic Neapolitan crust. Various locations, (484) 602-5454, pitrucopizza.com
- **Pizzeria DiMeo’s and Arde Osteria & Pizzeria** – These sibling restaurants, in Roxborough and Wayne respectively, import their San Marzano tomatoes directly from Italy and their *mozzarella di bufala* from a small farm in Campania, ensuring that their wood-fired pies have a down-to-the-last-drop authentic flavor. 8500 Henry Avenue, (215) 621-6134, pizzeriadimeos.com; 133 N. Wayne Avenue, Wayne, (484) 580-6786, ardewayne.com
- **Pizzeria Stella** – While the menu of pies at restaurateur Stephen Starr’s family-friendly Headhouse Square parlor is firmly rooted in an authentic flavor palate, a few surprises sneak in: Think garlic crema, long hot pepper pesto and aged provolone. 2nd & Lombard Streets, (215) 320-8000, pizzeriastella.net
- **Pizzeria Vetri** – With two Philly locations and one more in the King of Prussia Mall, Pizzeria Vetri—all with wood-fired Renato ovens—go all out. The Neapolitan crust requires a three-day rise. Side dish standouts include mortadella- and ricotta-stuffed, pistachio-sauced “*rotolo*,” which looks like a savory cinnamon bun and eats like heaven. 1615 Chancellor Street, (215) 763-3760; 1939 Callowhill Street, (215) 600-2629; 640 W. Dekalb Pike, King of Prussia, (267) 422-4201, pizzeriavetri.com

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- **Ravanesi Pizzeria** – A personal obsession led to professional training under top *pizzaioli*, and now David Ravanesi shares that passion with the masses at his eponymous Delaware County shop. Topped with house-made mozzarella and cooked in a handmade oven, the pizza is prepared in limited quantities nightly, so when it runs out, it runs out. 790 Baltimore Pike, Glen Mills, (484) 840-8912, ravanespizza.com
- **Wm. Mulherin's Sons** – Fishtown's modern Italian dining destination throws down the pizza gauntlet with gorgeously charred pies. Pitruco-trained chefs whip up a double *Margherita* with Burrata and *bufala mozzarella*, plus goodies like the Philly-centric "Spicy Jawn," with pepperoni, sharp provolone, long hots and coppa. 1355 N. Front Street, (267) 753-9478, wmmulherinssons.com
- **Zavino** – With venues in Midtown Village and University City, this reliable, casual-elegant pizzeria builds on a Neapolitan crust and oven foundation with Kennett Square mushrooms, Berkshire pork sausage and ricotta-stuffed veal meatballs. 112 S. 13th Street, (215) 732-2400; 3200 Chestnut Street, (215) 823-6897, zavinohospitalitygroup.com

Other Regional Styles:

Beyond Naples and Philly lies a world of pizza classification with distinctive characteristics, and many of these types can be sampled in and around town.

- **NYPD Pizza** – This no-frills Center City parlor offers something of a pizza smorgasbord. On the bountiful menu: Neapolitan, Sicilian and New York styles, and even Chicago-style deep dish. 140 S. 11th Street, (215) 733-0651, nypdpizzeriaphiladelphia.com
- **Florida Style Pizza** – Fans of calzone, stromboli and panzarotti seek out this under-the-radar deep South Philly shop for its signature pizza—which isn't a pizza, in the traditional sense, at all. "Florida Style" here translates to a sealed dough pocket filled with sauce, cheese and toppings, then baked to an addictively crisp golden brown on the outside. 2052 S. Beechwood Street, (215) 755-7946
- **Pizzeria Nonna** – Here's one lesser-known regional pizza style whose time has come: Germantown's Nonna focuses on Northeastern Pennsylvania pizza, also known as "pitz." That means square pizza—which sometimes involves (gasp!) cheddar. 5301 Germantown Avenue, (267) 766-6900
- **SLiCE** – Trenton-style pizza (i.e., thin-crust, with mozzarella beneath the sauce and toppings) lives on at the multi-location, wackily capitalized SLiCE. Three thriving Philly locations suggest that this New Jersey variant has more than a few fans in Philly. 1180 S. 10th Street, (215) 463-0868; 1740 Sansom Street, (215) 557-9299; 431 E. Girard Avenue, (215) 425-1555, slicea.com
- **Square Pie** – This homey Bella Vista spot invites patrons to chow down on hefty, Brooklyn-style Sicilian crusts amped up with cured pork belly, roasted potatoes and leeks, or roasted eggplant, capers and ricotta. The highlights may be its take on what many locals believe to be Philly's true iconic sandwich: roast pork with spinach and provolone. 801 E. Passyunk Avenue, (215) 238-0615, squarepiephilly.com

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