



a Slice OF THE D

THE MOTOR CITY KNOWS HOW TO ASSEMBLE PRIMO PIZZAS OF ALL SHAPES, SIZES AND STYLES

BY Jacquie Goetz Bluethmann
PHOTOS BY Marvin Shaouni

When *GQ* magazine ranked Detroit third among the great cities for pizza a few years back, (behind only New York City and Chicago) some people in this town still considered those fighting words. Talk to fans of the original Buddy's in Detroit, Pizzeria Biga in Southfield and Cloverleaf in Eastpointe, and they're resolute that their hometown pies aren't just among the nation's best, they ARE the best.

"There is a lot of great pizza in the area," asserted Molly Abraham, food critic for *The Detroit News* and *Hour Detroit* magazine. "It used to be that you had to go to a 'pizza place' to get deep-dish pizza. Not so anymore."

From deep-dish and thin-crust to Neapolitan, Detroit and its environs can satisfy and delight even the most discerning of pizza palates. Metro Detroit boasts many top-rate traditional pizzerias and a variety of restaurants that, while not exclusively serving up pizza, toss together such mighty fine pies that they might as well roll out the red-checked tablecloth and hire a host named Luigi. Here's where we suggest you sample a slice or two or maybe more.

ESTABLISHED IN 1936 ON THE CORNER OF CONANT AND 6 MILE ROADS AS A NEIGHBORHOOD TAVERN, IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1946 THAT BUDDY'S INTRODUCED ITS FAMOUS SQUARE PIZZA – THE FIRST OF ITS KIND – TO DETROIT. BUDDY'S NOW HAS NINE LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE METRO AREA.



Frank's

DW WYANDOTTE

FRANK'S

Dine in or carry out at this downriver favorite. A community fixture for 40+ years, Frank's pies have extra-crisp thin crusts. Ask for "the cheese" when your pizza arrives and you'll get a little bowl of grated Romano for sprinkling. The popular pizza burger pie is topped with hamburger meat, green peppers and onions, and insiders say you can't go wrong with a Frank's classic pepperoni.



FRANK'S SPECIAL
HAM, MUSHROOMS,
GREEN PEPPERS AND
ONIONS

THE HAWAIIAN
HAM, BACON, GREEN
PEPPERS, ONIONS AND
PINEAPPLE

EASTPOINTE M

CLOVERLEAF

Cloverleaf earned the distinction of "No. 1. Pizza in the Midwest" at the 2011 World Pizza Games, one among many accolades earned by the home of Detroit's original deep-dish pizza. Gus Guerra, the man behind the first square pizza served at the original Buddy's Pizza, opened Cloverleaf in 1953. The family-owned pizzeria has been an area gem ever since.



BBQ CHICKEN
CHICKEN, RED ONIONS
AND BBQ SAUCE

THE HAWAIIAN
HAM, PINEAPPLE
AND BACON

f "CLOVERLEAF HANDS DOWN!" - DENISE P.



Luigi's Original

GN SOUTHFIELD | ROYAL OAK

PIZZERIA BIGA

Literally “biga” translates to yeast, the special ingredient that gives Pizzeria Biga’s Neapolitan piecrusts their signature chewy and flavorful qualities. Baked in a 900-degree, wood-burning, custom-built brick oven flown over from Naples, Italy, Pizza Napoletana crusts come out slightly charred. From there, patrons can order their pie red or white (with or without tomato sauce) and select from a long list of toppings that includes baby artichokes, roasted zucchini and fingerling potatoes.



THE BACCO SAUSAGE
HOUSE-MADE SAUSAGE, ROASTED ONIONS, HOT PEPPERS AND HOUSE-BLEND MOZZARELLA

DUCK PROSCIUTTO
GORGONZOLA, ROASTED PEPPERS AND HOUSE-BLEND MOZZARELLA

M HARRISON TWP.

LUIGI'S ORIGINAL

Wood-paneled walls and checkered tablecloths give Luigi’s the Old-World Italian feel you want your neighborhood pizzeria to emanate. A staple in the community for 50+ years, this Italian restaurant is most famous for its pizza. Its dough is hand-tossed into round crusts and crowned with sesame seeds. Crust can also be topped with Parmesan cheese, garlic butter or Cajun seasoning. The Gourmet Veggie (fresh broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini, yellow squash, red onions, portabello mushrooms and grated Asiago cheese) has been featured in GQ magazine.



LUIGI'S SPECIAL
CHEESE, PEPPERONI, HAM, ONIONS, GREEN PEPPERS AND MUSHROOMS

GN FARMINGTON HILLS

TOMATOES APIZZA

Named “Michigan’s Best Pizza” by *Food Network* magazine, Tomatoes Apizza was the first pizzeria to use a coal-fired oven in Michigan. With two locations in Farmington Hills, Tomatoes Apizza offers thin-crust white pizza (mozzarella, fresh tomatoes, garlic and basil), red pizza (red sauce and Pecorino Romano) and green pizza (mozzarella, spinach and garlic) all on a dough made from organic unbleached flour. Owner Michael Weinstein says, “Our pizzas are salty, greasy, chewy, burnt and crispy all at the same time.”

“OUR PIZZAS ARE SALTY, GREASY, CHEWY, BURNT AND CRISPY ALL AT THE SAME TIME.”

— TOMATOES APIZZA
OWNER
MICHAEL WEINSTEIN



THE NAPLES SAMPLER
¼ CLASSIC WITH ONE TOPPING, ¼ WHITE, ¼ GREEN AND ¼ FRESH MOZZARELLA



Tomatoes Apizza

HOLLY

ALEX'S MARKET & GRILL

A gas station that doubles as a gourmet market and grill. Off I-75 at exit 101, Alex’s is known for its pizza sticks. Pizza dough is rolled out then stuffed with pepperoni slices and mozzarella cheese. The dough is then baked and topped with olive oil, garlic seasoning and Parmesan cheese. “It’s like biting into a pepperoni pizza rolled up,” said owner Steve Nannoshi. Specialty pizzas like Alex’s Ultimate are among the most popular traditional pizzas.



PIZZA STICKS
PEPPERONI AND MOZZARELLA TOPPED WITH OLIVE OIL, GARLIC AND PARMESAN

ALEX'S ULTIMATE
PEPPERONI, SAUSAGE, BACON, MUSHROOMS, GREEN PEPPERS, ONIONS AND MOZZARELLA

f “ALEX’S MARKET & GRILL IN HOLLY IS THE ABSOLUTE BEST PIZZA AROUND.”
— JASON W.



CLARKSTON

UNION WOODSHOP

The *Detroit Free Press*' 2011 Restaurant of the Year, Union Woodshop, is a hot spot for locals, visitors and celebs alike. Handcrafted, wood-fired pizzas are part of the reason why. The You-Choose pizza allows patrons to top the base pizza with house-made maple bacon, prosciutto or Woodshop Italian sausage among an array of meats. Specialty pizzas include the Chipotle Shrimp (smoked shrimp, red onions, sweet corn and Lockhart spicy sauce).



THE MARGHERITA
FRESH MOZZARELLA, SAN MARZANO TOMATO SAUCE, MARINATED TOMATOES AND FRESH BASIL

THE WOODSHOP
SMOKED CHICKEN, PULLED PORK, BRISKET, ONIONS, MEMPHIS SAUCE AND CHEESE BLEND

Union Woodshop



DW GROSSE POINTE

GREEN ZONE PIZZA

Made-to-order, gluten-free pizzas are a staple of this new addition to the metro Detroit pizza scene, which garners its name from its "green" biz practices. The floors, counters and tabletops here are made from recycled materials, for example, and ingredients in their pies, like the Michigan Cherry BBQ Chicken, are organic and many locally sourced. Flour is purchased from Detroit's famous Avalon Bakery. Green Zone takes advantage of a special oven technology that's not only more energy efficient, but it can crank out a bubbling hot pizza in a mere three minutes. Deliciously fast.



THE CALIFORNIA
SUN-DRIED TOMATOES, ROASTED GARLIC, SPINACH, RED ONIONS, MOZZARELLA, FRESH HERBS AND OLIVE OIL

GN NORTHVILLE

PIZZA CUTTER

Located in a former service garage, Pizza Cutter is a downtown Northville favorite, especially in summer when the patio is open for outdoor dining. Deep-dish, thin-crust and regular-crust offerings are available. Roll in on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday and order your pie with the yummy wheat crust.



THE REGULAR ROUND
WITH PEPPERONI AND DOUBLE CHEESE

DOWNTOWN PIZZA DELIGHTS

Coney dogs aren't the only downtown Detroit dish known to satisfy a craving for super-tasty fare. Top-notch pizza is aplenty in the heart of the city. A few faves:

BUDDY'S – DETROIT

Anyone for a game of bocce ball while waiting for a world-famous, square-shaped, deep-dish Buddy's pie? The original Buddy's on Conant is a local legend; recognized as "One of the Top 25 Pizza Spots in the U.S." by *Food & Wine*. Try the Meat Deluxe or the Super (cheese, pepperoni, onions, green peppers, mushrooms and ham).

17125 Conant St.
Detroit, 48212 DD
(313) 892-9001

www.buddyspizza.com

Nine locations throughout the metro area.

MILANO BAKERY & CAFE

Enjoy the scents of baking bread and pastries while taking in a personal thin-crust pizza at this cozy bakery and restaurant. Popular picks include the Vegetarian, BLT and BBQ Chicken.

3500 Russell St.
Detroit, 48207 DD
(313) 833-9557

www.milanobakerydetroit.com

NIKI'S IN GREEKTOWN

Grab pizza for one (two slices) or a whole deep-dish square pie with your choice of toppings and a Greek salad from the place that aptly has the latter mastered to perfection.

734 Beaubien
Detroit, 48226 DD
(313) 961-4303

www.nikispizza.com

PIZZAPAPALIS IN GREEKTOWN

Chicago-style deep-dish in The D is very much a viable option thanks to places such as Pizzapapalis in Greektown. You can't go wrong with the Papalis Gourmet (spinach, black olives, chicken breast, garlic and feta) or the Seafood Combo (shrimp and krabmeat).

553 Monroe St.
Detroit, 48226 DD
(313) 961-8020

www.pizzapapalis.com

SUPINO PIZZERIA

Zagat voters put Supino in the No. 1 spot for food in metro Detroit for 2013. Also on the *Food & Wine* list (see Buddy's), Supino's is known for its red and white thin-crust pizzas served in a casual, cozy setting located in Detroit's Eastern Market. The Bismarck is the owner's favorite and features a red sauce, fresh mozzarella, prosciutto and an egg cracked in the middle.

2457 Russell St.
Detroit, 48207 DD
(313) 567-7879

www.supinopizza.com



TOWN PUMP TAVERN

Take in some live music while enjoying hand-tossed pizzas like the Mexican (chorizo, onions, cheddar, tomatoes and jalapenos) and the Greek (feta, mozzarella, tomatoes, red onions, black olives and pepperoncini).

100 W. Montcalm
Detroit, 48201 DD
(313) 961-1929

www.thetownpumptavern.com

WOLFGANG PUCK PIZZERIA & CUCINA

Featuring celebrated chef Wolfgang Puck's famed wood-oven baked pizzas. Try the Wild Mushroom with goat cheese, leeks and basil pesto or go meat eater with the Italian Sausage pizza topped with rapini and roasted garlic.

MGM Grand Detroit Hotel & Casino
1777 Third St.

Detroit, 48226 DD

(313) 465-1777, (877) 888-2121

www.mgmgranddetroit.com



PIZZAPAPALIS DEEP-DISH: YOU WILL BE VERY FULL — TRUST US.

GETTING THERE

Alex's Market & Grill
6410 Grange Hall Road
Holly, 48442 **O**
(248) 634-6100

Cloverleaf Bar & Restaurant
24443 Gratiot Ave.
Eastpointe, 48021 **M**
(586) 777-5391
www.cloverleafrestaurant.com

Frank's Restaurant & Pizzeria
3144 Biddle Ave.
Wyandotte, 48192 **DW**
(734) 282-0512

Green Zone Pizza
17008 Kercheval St.
Grosse Pointe, 48230 **DW**
(313) 332-0559
www.greenzonepizza.com

Luigi's Original
36691 Jefferson Ave.
Harrison Twp., 48045 **M**
(586) 468-7711
www.luigisoriginal.com

Pizza Cutter
340 N. Center St.
Northville, 48167 **GN**
(248) 348-3333
www.pizzacutters.com

Pizzeria Biga
29110 Franklin Road
Southfield, 48034 **GN**
(248) 750-2442
www.pizzeriabiga.com

Additional location:
711 S. Main St.
Royal Oak, 48067 **O**
(248) 544-2442

Tomatoes Apizza
29275 I4 Mile Road
Farmington Hills, 48334 **GN**
(248) 855-3555
www.tomatoesapizza.com

Additional location:
24369 Halsted Road
Farmington Hills, 48335 **GN**
(248) 888-4888

Union Woodshop
18 S. Main St.
Clarkston, 48346 **O**
(248) 625-5660
www.unionwoodshop.com

Thinking how nice and simple your visit to metro Detroit would be if you had a customized online map with only these featured destinations plotted? We agree.

www.visitdetroit.com/features/116-best-pizza-in-detroit

PIES A GO-GO

Looking for a good pie on the fly? Fear not. Metro Detroit is chock-full of carryout-only pizzerias for all budgets and taste preferences.

BENITO'S

With locations throughout metro Detroit, Benito's is an easy option for your carryout fix. Got a sizable brood to feed? Try the Big Benito covered with 100 pepperonis and cut into 20 foot-long slices.

24270 Novi Road
Novi, 48375 **GN**
(248) 348-2600
www.benitospizza.com

CLOVERLEAF

This famous pizza place boasts a carryout-only location in Macomb Township, where you can order up the pizzeria's signature square pizza and enjoy it from wherever you choose.

48932 Hayes Road
Macomb, 48044 **M**
(586) 566-8220
www.cloverleaf-pizza.com

GREEN LANTERN

This much-loved pizza place's Royal Oak location is carryout-only. Regulars recommend the BLT pizza. All pies come round or square. Thin and deep-dish offerings are available.

4326 Rochester Road
Royal Oak, 48073 **O**
(248) 298-3005
www.greenlanternlounge.com

HIPPIE'S PIZZA

This late-night pizza place in Royal Oak is known for its gluten-free and vegan crusts and toppings. Open until 2 a.m. on weeknights and 3 a.m. on weekends, Hippiie's offers a variety of gourmet pizzas, thin, round, square and deep-dish.

121 E. 13 Mile Road
Royal Oak, 48073 **O**
(248) 733-1111
www.eathippiespizza.com

LITTLE CAESARS

Looking for a quick pizza fix that will be easy on your pocketbook? The Little Caesars Hot-N-Ready gets you a \$5 plain or pepperoni pie with no wait. And in The D (aka Piz-zatown in some circles) you need not look far to find a Little Caesars.

Various locations in metro Detroit
www.littlecaesars.com



"HIPPIES PIZZA ...
GLUTEN-FREE AND
VEGAN-FRIENDLY!"
- CHUCK K.



DISTRICT CODES

- BD** Beyond Detroit
- DW** Dearborn/Wayne
- DD** Downtown Detroit
- GN** Greater Novi
- M** Macomb
- O** Oakland
- WO** Windsor, Ontario

Jacquie Goetz Bluethmann is a freelance writer, native Michigander and pizza enthusiast (is anyone not?). She blogs about life as a parent of two at www.MomMeetsBaby.com. She is thus especially interested in pizza places that offer kid-friendly menus and distractions! Follow her on Twitter @JacquieGoetz.