

does not go to San Antonio, Texas, expecting to eat world-class pizza. Instantly, we were reprimanded by a veritable posse of Texans all calling out “Dough!” Dough Pizzeria Napoletana, that is, a classy little place that turns out classic little pizzas. Among its champions was none other than *Texas Monthly* Food Editor Pat Sharpe, who called it “beyond fabulous” and described the fare as “pizza of the gods.” Cooked the way Neapolitan pizza is supposed to be—in a ferociously hot wood-burning oven for under two minutes—a Dough pie emerges with an elegant crust and toppings that include oak-roasted mushrooms or Italian ham or even fried eggs.

**10 | Evo**

1075 E. Montague Ave., North Charleston, SC, 843.225.1796  
While the Palmetto State never has been known as a source of great pizza, Lowcountry cooks are famously talented; and Evo—an acronym for extra virgin oven—is proof that those creative juices combined with the best local products and a wood-fired oven can equal transcendent pizza.

But before we get to the pizza, may we detour to hors d’oeuvres? Like to a peak-of-summer panzanella salad, starring big chunks of sunshine-fresh tomato and significant house-made croutons along with pickled red onion, crumbles of creamy blue cheese, and basil, all dressed with bright balsamic vinaigrette. For a more simple starter, you can get something called an “olive

Pepe’s (top) and Totonno’s (middle left) are benchmarks; relative newcomers such as the Portland (Maine) Pie Co. (since 1997) and Charleston’s Evo (since 2005) stretch the envelope with the likes of lobster pie.



plate.” It is more than a plate. It is a big bowlful of black and green ones—many dozens—along with a bunch of whole garlic cloves that have been roasted until they are soft and sweet, the gorgeous cornucopia marinated in oil rich with basil.

Now, about the pizza. Cooked briefly in a roaring wood-fired oven, it comes out with a crust that is thin and relatively lightweight, albeit strong enough not to wilt even under seas of melty cheese. Its edge bears the brand of a high-temperature bake in the form of a few char marks on the puffy parts. Toppings range from basic Margherita to such wonders as pistachio pesto topped with mozzarella and just enough crème fraîche to elevate the eating experience into wanton indulgence. We have enjoyed a special of locally made feta along with fresh okra and a purée of roasted garlic and corn as well as the awesome “pork trifecta” of sausage, pepperoni, and smoked bacon.

For dessert, it is hard not to indulge in a sampler of Sweet Teeth brand chocolates (made by a former employee) that includes a salted caramel heart and a peach cobbler bon bon; but you must also reserve a significant amount of appetite for the amazing blueberry calzone—a plate-size pocket of pizza dough filled with dark chocolate melting around local blueberries and drizzled with South Carolina honey.

**11 | Fork in the Alley**  
2123 Crystal Spring Ave.,  
Roanoke, VA, 540.982.3675  
Billing itself as a Brick Oven Pub, FITA has a full menu of hamburgers and interesting hot dogs (including half-smokes and brats) available with such gourmet toppings as pimento cheese, olive relish, and chipotle mayonnaise; but thin-

crusted pizzas are its claim to fame. Available in 10- or 14-inch sizes, they come with a choice of sauces—herbed olive oil Parmesan, alfredo, herbed ricotta, or traditional red—and with toppings that range from pepperoni and sausage to poblano peppers and pineapple. Specialty pizzas, loaded with combinations of ingredients are, the menu says, “made with a fork in mind.”

**12 | Joe Mama’s Wood Fired Pizza**

406 Reid Ave., Port St. Joe, FL  
850.229.6262  
Look into the oven at Joe Mama’s and you will see a pile of wood glowing red and radiating 800 degrees of heat that can cook a pizza in only a couple of minutes. Made from dough that develops tremendous flavor during a 48-hour fermentation, imported San Marzano tomatoes, and a blend of mozzarella and Pecorino Romano, these are great artisan pies. Joe Mama’s menu also includes oven-roasted wings and muffalattas on house-baked focaccia.

**13 | Jumbo Slice**

2341 18th St., Washington, D.C.  
202.234.9700  
A Washington, D.C., institution. Billing itself as the “First, Oldest, Original Jumbo Slice” pizza parlor, Jumbo Slice is open until 4 a.m., which is about when the craving for one is most likely to strike. Cooked in a pan that is 3 feet in diameter, each pizza is sliced into eighths and requires two hands to hold. While a few toppings are available, nearly everybody gets theirs plain.

**14 | Newport Pizza Company**

601 Monmouth St., Newport, KY  
859.261.4900  
Talk about local! The Newport



Pizza Company makes not only plain cheese and pepperoni and sausage pizzas, but pizzas topped with Cincinnati chili (the Queen City is just over the river), and a weekend-only pie suitable for brunch topped with scrambled eggs, sausage-cream gravy, and chunks of goetta. (Goetta is the locally loved pork-and-pin oat loaf that’s sizzled on a grill and takes the place of bacon, ham, or sausage on a breakfast plate.) The chili pizza, augustly named The Cincinnati, truly is a tour de force in which the crust serves the same role as spaghetti noodles in the original dish: a pedestal for spicy-sweet chili meat and, in this case, a bed of cream cheese and a topping of bright orange melted Cheddar. Beans—a fundamental ingredient in five-way chili—are not an option, but onions are. The repertoire includes a large selection of craft and imported beers.

**15 | Old Fire House**

6350 Highway 162, Hollywood, SC, 843.889.9512  
There is a great Lowcountry dinner menu at the Old Fire House (which really is located in an old fire house), including shrimp and grits and whole crispy flounder, but it is hard to resist the thin-crust pizzas. They are personal-sized at 10 inches, cut into six pieces, and the basic ones come with a blend of mozzarella and provolone. Specialty pies offer feta cheese or blue cheese, and the menu suggests “create your own” from a broad assortment of meats, veggies, and sauces. The last time we visited, we invented a pizza that was so intriguing to the staff that they requested we send a slice back to the kitchen. After tasting it, they decided to put it on the menu, as the Roadfood Lowcountry Special: garlic oil, pimento cheese, onion, sausage, and shrimp. Luxury incarnate!