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On the Cover
Verace Italian Restaurant
Photo by Brian Roberts

THE Power OF Pizza

Local restaurants put the satisfaction of “aah” in their ‘za

by Rebecca Dumais

The oldest recorded usage of the word “pizza” is from a Latin text from the town of Gaeta. The document, dated 997 AD stated that a tenant of certain property is to give the bishop of Gaeta *duodecim pizze* (12 pizzas) every Christmas Day, and another 12 every Easter Sunday. The idea of only being able to enjoy pizza on two occasions a year is just wrong.

Thankfully, you can go anywhere any day of the week to get your favourite combination of flavours.

And according to History.com, King Umberto I and Queen Margherita visited Naples in 1889, and being bored with their regular consumption of French haute cuisine, asked for an assortment of pizzas from the local pizzeria. The Queen’s favourite was topped with soft white cheese, tomatoes and basil. It became known as the Margherita.

It’s still the most popular pizza around. →







VERACE PIZZA



Yes, you've likely heard Latin the saying "In vino veritas" (In wine, there is truth). Verace in Italian means: true, genuine, or real.

The pizza that you'll enjoy at Verace Italian Restaurant is true to its name.

Last year the restaurant received a certificate of authenticity from the Associazione Vera Pizza Napoletana (AVPN). The organization is dedicated to preserving the culture of Neapolitan Pizza, which is the governing body of Neapolitan Pizza.

This distinction has only been given to about 1,000 restaurants worldwide, points out Tomo Kovacek, owner of Verace. He and his partner Aleksandra Popovic opened the restaurant in August 2021.

The rules are strict, and the results are outstanding.

All of the elements that go into creating Verace's pizzas are followed to AVPN's standards, from the wood-burning oven (import-

ed from Naples, Italy), to the dough, the chef and the ingredients, which are also imported from Italy.

If a restaurant boasts VPN, you can expect the same Napolitana Pizza no matter where you are, whether it's Australia, Argentina, or Oakville. "There are many styles of pizza all over the world, but (Verace's) will make you feel like you're eating a pizza that came straight out of the oven in Italy," he says. "It's not (just) any kind of pizza."

Both functional and relaxing as part of Verace's ambiance – and its amazingly good pizza – is the wood oven, which you can peer into when you walk by or sit at the bar. It takes a mere 90 seconds to fire your favourite pizza pie. "Because of the recipe of the dough ... it's perfect timing for cooking the pizza," Kovacek says. "Wood (fired) makes the best tasting pizza; it creates a different flavour" than other types of ovens.

Other makers would agree that those



crispy, nearly charred spots on the outside crust would have had customers sending it back to the kitchen to remake. It's called leopard spotting, and it's a good thing. It's the result of cooking dough with high hydration at high heat.

What makes it different than other pizzas, Kovacek says, is flavours that are the simplest. It's all about good olive oil, good tomato sauce, and good mozzarella cheese."

The signature pizza is the Verace. This pizza bianca (white) has Fior di latte, eggs, freshly shaved truffles and pecorino.

Truffles are a delicacy enjoyed regularly in Croatia, where Kovacek is from. "We're known for our truffles in Istria," he says, which Italy capitulated to Croatia in 1945. It's common for good restaurants to serve truffle dishes in Istria. "I was thinking, why not put that on the pizza?"

Verace continues to celebrate authentic Italian food embracing tradition, which is something we can all appreciate. "People gravitate towards tradition and (the) things that are done the same way in Italy," says Chef Manny.

Kovacek always receives great feedback about their pizza. "Whoever has tried it for the first time – the Neapolitan authentic pizza – they love it."

For more info visit Veracepizza.ca

Verace
ITALIAN RESTAURANT



Oakville's Best NEAPOLITAN PIZZA

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