

Welcome | Log in | Member Center

Search: GO



Manage your subscription

On the homepage

Crosstown, 35W reopened after natural gas blast, fire in south Minneapolis

Helicopters douse Japan's stricken reactor

11 people in Blaine sent to hospital after drug overdose

Hennepin court referee assaulted during mental health commitment trial

Minneapolis reports three more measles cases

Vita.mn



Happy St. Patrick's Day!



Switch to any Sprint smartphone and receive a \$125 service credit.

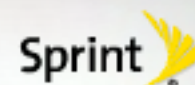
Limited time only 2/11 to 4/16

Samsung Epic™ 4G



Learn more

Restrictions apply.



Replay

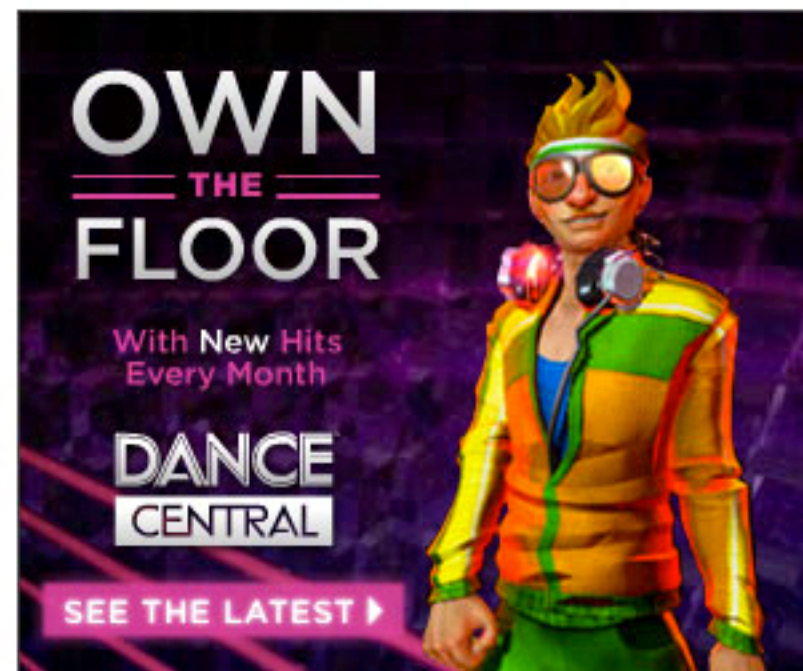
Home | Lifestyle | Taste



Tom Wallace, Star Tribune

Chef/owner Jordan Smith is clearly having the time of his life.

Black Sheep revives pizza passion



Most Popular | Most e-mailed | Most viewed

Pizza newbies, doing it right

Blog: Restaurants: Opening soon

Use your (homemade) noodle

Recipe: Homemade Egg Noodles

Recipes: Beer-Battered Cod, Creamy Coleslaw

Counter Intelligence: Madison crowds good, bad for restaurants



Charter Internet

Charter Internet Express and Plus speeds are now even faster.

[Learn More](#)

Out There

[NJ hot dog mecca sues deli over name](#)

[Pa. dad denies playing ninja when son, 4, alone](#)

[Maple syrup sticky issue for Ohio councilman](#)

[March soreness: Now's the time for a vasectomy?](#)

[Vita.mn](#)



[List your favorite Irish pubs](#)

[March Madness](#)



An all-American favorite gets a new take with a coal-fired oven.

By **RICK NELSON**, Star Tribune

Last update: January 14, 2009 - 11:59 AM

First-time restaurateurs -- and veteran ones, for that matter -- could take a few lessons from Jordan Smith. After an admirable career working for others (his résumé includes top positions at Mission American Kitchen and the former Azur as well as directing the launch of countless D'Amico & Sons outlets), Smith decided the time was right to step out on his own.

Rather than going big, Smith took the small route, a wise step in this bruising economy. Pizza, brilliantly prepared, is the passion at **Black Sheep Pizza**, with little else to distract.

After tasting one of Smith's understated creations -- I'm particularly crazy about one topped with thin-sliced oyster mushrooms, a veritable forest of rosemary and just the right amount of smoky mozzarella, I think I've ordered it five times in as many weeks -- I'm convinced that the Domino's and Papa Murphy's and Pizza Huts of this world should pack it up and retreat in shame, seeing as how they are chiefly responsible for the bastardization of this primal food group. Frankly, until I'd slid into one of the wide booths at Black Sheep, I'd forgotten just how much there is to adore about the simple experience that is a great all-

26 Comments [+ Add comment](#)

[Print this story](#)

[E-mail this story](#)

[Recommend](#)

[Tweet](#) 0

[Digg](#) ↑

BLACK SHEEP PIZZA ★★★

Location: 600 Washington Av. N., Minneapolis, 612-342-2625, blacksheeppizza.com.

Hours: 4:30 to 10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 4:30 to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Atmosphere: Bare-bones, but in a good way. A few dimmer switches couldn't hurt.

Service: Fast, casual, cheerful.

Sound level: Conversation is a challenge when full.

Recommended dishes: Tomato-oregano pizza, mushroom-mozzarella-rosemary pizza, sausage-salami pizza, meatballs, roasted olives, ice cream sandwiches.

Wine list: Short - perhaps too short - but inexpensive and well-chosen. Decent craft beer selection.

[Recipes: Cinnamon Granola, Oven-Fried Chicken, Lebanese Potato Salad, Tandoori Tofu, Sauteed Broccolini](#)

LEGAL

SAFE DRIVERS CAN
SAVE 45% OR MORE
IN MINNESOTA

Allstate 55003 [QUOTE NOW](#)

[Restaurant finder](#)

[Recipe finder](#)

[Taste events](#)

Locate a restaurant instantly, and read full-length and capsule reviews by Star Tribune critics. You can also search by neighborhood and cuisine.

Name:

Type of food:

In the area:

[Find it](#)

[Star Tribune Classifieds](#)



[Ready? Fire up our March Madness page](#)

American pizza.

Let's talk crust for a moment. Smith isn't doing the overt charred-and-blistered Neapolitan thing, and why should he? Punch has locked down a near-monopoly on that market. No designer cracker-crust model here, either, and don't even mention the words "cardboard" and "Black Sheep" in the same sentence, or I will hunt you down like a dog in the street. No, Smith is showing how the basic, beloved American-style pizza is done, nurturing a crisp beauty that confidently straddles the fine line between thin and sturdy. It's an achievement that stands out not only because Smith is remarkably good, but because nearly everything else concerning the sad state of the American pizza is remarkably bad.

A taste test makes it clear

[Next page](#) >

Recent Taste stories

[Recipe: Martha's lemon chicken](#) - January 14, 2009

Comment on this story | [Read all 26 comments](#) | [Show comments](#)

[Register or log in to comment](#)

Get the Star Tribune delivered to your home each day!

[Click here](#) to subscribe.



Price range: \$6 to \$13 for 12-inch pizzas, \$12 to \$22 for 16-inch pizzas (extra ingredients \$2 to \$3), starters \$6 to \$8, dessert \$5.

Related Content



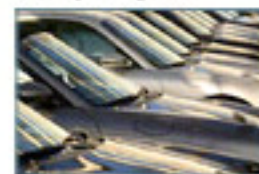
Frequent patrons

Tom Wallace, Star Tribune

More from Taste

- [Pizza newbies, doing it right](#)
- [Counter Intelligence: Madison crowds good, bad for restaurants](#)
- [Tidbits: More tempting](#)
- [What's cooking: A nutritious home plate](#)
- [Cooking vegetables? One recipe can fit all](#)

AUTOS



Used Autos

We've retooled Autos to bring you the largest used auto inventory in one ultra convenient, easy-to-use site. Get behind the wheel of your dream ride today.

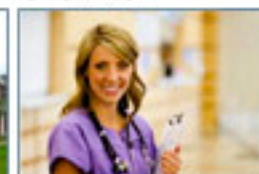
HOMES



Find a Home

[Search](#) thousands of listings nationwide. Listings include local foreclosures and upcoming Open Houses.

JOBS



Healthcare Careers

Exploration. Education. Your healthcare career awaits. [Click here](#) to explore a career in healthcare.

[Job Listings](#) • [Cars for Sale](#) • [Homes for Rent](#)
[Houses for Sale](#) • [Other Classifieds](#)

Make A Career Move Today



StarTribune.com TopJobs

[Sales Positions](#)

Trinity Exteriors, Inc

[Human Resource and Talent Acquisition Manager](#)

Spring Lake Park School District

[SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING WORKER](#)

City of Minneapolis

[Copilot Field Engineer](#)

Compellent Technologies

[AIX Product Specialist](#)

Compellent Technologies

[Mechanical Engineer](#)

[Electrical Engineer](#)

Hysitron, Inc.

[International Purchasing Expert](#)

Cat Pumps

[Regional Sales Manager](#)

Cat Pumps

[Tooling & Accessories - Inside Sales](#)

Productivity, Inc.

[Systems & Database Administrator](#)

Productivity, Inc.

[Small Business Opening - Start with a Book of](#)