

THE BITE

The Salads at Black Sheep Pizza

by James Norton on October 21, 2009



Becca Dilley / Heavy Table

the churn

Skimming the cream of local food news

Beer-Braised Chicken and Recipe Roundup

Orzo and wild rice, shrimp and artichoke pasta, bacon-wrapped maple pork loin and Dad's Weekend Buttermilk Pancakes, beer-braised chicken with cornmeal-chive dumplings, slow cooker black bean soup, and whiskey and smoke mac and cheese.

The Brooklyn Rollout and Morning Roundup

A mixed review of Ecopolitan ("everything there literally moves at a snail's pace"), "groaking," defined (outside of a Punch Pizza), local rollout events for Brooklyn Brewery, and glimpses of spring via Harmony Valley Farm.

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Your ordinary pizza parlor is not a good place to start when searching for a great salad, but [Black Sheep Coal Fired Pizza](#) is not your ordinary pizza parlor. The recently opened Warehouse District hot spot boasts pizza with a beautiful crispy / chewy crust that recalls the East Coast's finest, and its menu is confidently spare — there's not much on it beyond pizza and salads.

The salads, in this kind of an environment, are easy to overlook. That's a mistake. They taste garden fresh. Not TGI Friday's, flavorless, soulless, crappy "garden fresh," but actually recently picked from a real garden garden fresh, with zip and crackle and crispness and vital life in each bite. The farmers market salad (which varies in composition and price and tends to be about \$8) is a great starter for two; each time I've ordered it, it's been different and terrific.

Last week, it was thin slices of fennel, portabella mushrooms, parsley, lemon olive oil dressing, and a thin dusting of parmesan cheese. Sound unusual? It was. It was weird and beautifully calibrated, fresh both in a taste and conceptual manner. This somewhat crazy newfangled salad was an outlier even for Black Sheep, but was, at the same time, typical of their approach — a few complementary high quality ingredients that speak for themselves, not much in the way of dressing, and a kick to the face of flavor. In this case, the snap of the fennel was played up by the lemon oil, and complemented by the funkier, earthier embrace of the cheese and mushrooms.

So here's the protip for ordering at Black Sheep: One 12-inch, topping-loading pizza per two people, and one salad as well, to get you started. You'll come back with a check of about \$12 a person and one of the best — if simplest — meals in town.

Black Sheep Coal Fired Pizza

East Coast pizza in the Warehouse District, Minneapolis

600 Washington Ave N

Minneapolis, MN 55401

612.342.2625

OWNERS / CHEF: Colleen Doran and Jordan Smith / Jordan Smith

HOURS:

Sun-Thu 4:30-10pm

Fri-Sat 4:30-11pm

BAR: Beer and Wine

VEGETARIAN / VEGAN: Yes / Yes

ENTREE RANGE: \$10-15

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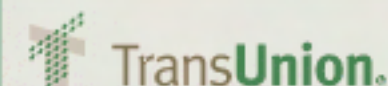
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Chase

10/21/2009 at 10:00 AM

Agreed, I'd go as far as saying this is the best pizza joint in town.

artsy

10/21/2009 at 12:50 PM

James-
It does my heart good to read such a heartfelt praise of creative high-quality salads! This is enough to get me over there-I can't tell you how happy I am NOT to hear about candied walnuts or craisins! Love from the Salad Queen

Maggie

10/22/2009 at 1:09 PM

HAD to go there last night based on this write up. The farmer's market salad was excellent! Roasted potatoes, parsnips, carrots, a basil vinaigrette, spinach... mmm! Loved the pizza too, especially the crust. I've realized in recent months that I'm a bit of a crust snob and this one fit the bill for me. Yum!

Kris

10/23/2009 at 9:03 AM

Excellent pizza! Also appreciate the accomodating staff for bringing me a side of anchovies to add to my pieces of

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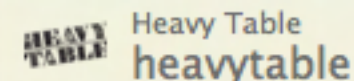
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Yet another local brewery popping up: <http://pourdecisionsbrew> and [@PDBCbeer](#) More details when we get 'em. ^JN

pizza.

I would however urge anyone visiting not to leave without ordering their housemade ice cream sandwich. It's plenty big to share and the best I've ever had.

Carla

10/23/2009 at 1:42 PM

I must have been at the Black Sheep on an off night. I wasn't impressed with anything. They didn't even have ice tea when we went, though our very nice server said they hoped to carry it soon.

Our salad was a meager affair, certainly nothing noteworthy about it, other than coming in an interesting bucket/bowl. It wasn't enough to share. I'd take the Punch pizza any day.

And our pizza, the Oyster Mushroom, Smoked Mozerella & Rosemary special was a bad order. The oven is so hot that the crust cooks well before the mushrooms, so they were essentially raw. And it was so dry I had to ask for olive oil to make it edible. I'd avoid it.

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