Foodie Arts & Culture Family & Kids Style & Nightlife Health & Wellness Guest Blog



EVERYTHING FUN IN THE ST. PAUL AREA

No Black Sheep Here!

by Stephanie Hansen on Jul.02, 2012, under Foodie



Everybody loves pizza: My husband learned to make pizza on the grill about 6 years ago. For most grilling season heralds big fat pieces of sizzling red meat (oh yes we have those too) but many days at our house you will find us at the grill with a pizza stone. My husband's pizza is flat and crisp with a light hand on whatever topping we are having so you can really taste the crust. We have pesto, tomato or an olive oil and garlic "sauce" and we use lots of fresh herbs and a variety of cheeses when we grill pizza.

My husband's pizzas are so good that it had ruined the idea of going out to pizza for me. I have a hard time paying for something that I know he can make a thousand times better at home. This all changed when we discovered Black Sheep Pizza Coal Fired Pizza at 512 N

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Robert Street in St. Paul.

Black Sheep Pizza is amazing. The coal burns extremely hot in their coal fired oven giving the dough a beautifully crisp, thin, flat slightly charred crust that is really a delight. This is the pizza crust that my husband strives for on the grill. Pizzas come in 12 or 16 inch and a 12 inch easily feeds two people - a 16 inch 4. You can order your pizza to your liking with the usual suspects for toppings but you will also find some unique toppings like oyster mushrooms, meatballs, capers, pickled peppers and smoked mozzarella.

The signature pizzas at Black Sheep are very well thought out combinations. My favorites are the number 4 which is the

ricotta, meatball and garlic and the number 5 which is fennel sausage, cracked green olive, onions and salami. The ricotta at Black Sheep is puffy and light and makes salty little clouds on that beautiful crust. The meatballs on the meatball pizza are dense, juicy and hefty surrounded by the ricotta clouds it's a great combination. The green olive, onion and fennel sausage has delicious chunks of fennel flavored sausage accompanied by the brine of the green olives it's another great combination. The Olives are firm and fleshy too not those wimpy, soggy, olive rings you find at most pizza shops. The red sauce at Black Sheep is used sparingly. It does not overwhelm the toppings or the crust and is sweet with hints of basil.



Black Sheep has some other must have items so it's best to go with a

crowd so you can try lots of things. I really love the ricotta cracker appetizer. They make their own crispy crackers in the coal fired oven and the ricotta spread on them is heaven. Each day they have oven roasted vegetables that caramelize in their



hot oven to just the perfect tenderness. They serve roast vegetables as a side or you can usually find them in the Fresh Market Salad which is literally a salad of the moment from the local farmers market. I have had real gems here like potato and arugula salad with tarragon aioli or a roasted fennel salad with goat cheese and roast beets and carrots with various cheese and lettuce pairings that often make their way onto the menu. The salads are dressed perfectly and come in a big stainless steel bowl with tongs meant for sharing.

Black Sheep has a location in Minneapolis too at 600 Washington Avenue N in the North Loop but I really like the St Paul vibe best. The service is super friendly and there is a come as you are feel that sometimes can be lacking in the trendier Minneapolis Black Sheep. Table

waits are short but easy with counter service on beer and wine. The local beer list is a perfect complement to their pizza pies. My only wish for Black Sheep is that they would offer some dessert. I can only imagine the tarts, chocolate chip cookies, and dessert pizzas they could get out of those ovens!

Black Sheep Pizza

www.blacksheeppizza.com

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