

distractions

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photo by erich boekehelder



College towns. Lots of taverns. Lots of tiny apartments with bland white walls. Lots of people of the opposite sex to look at when the springtime sun decides to show itself.

But the best thing about college towns is, of course, pizza. Thick crust, thin crust, oozy mozzarella, lots of oregano, pizza. Students thrive on it, especially those who (a) have to eat dorm food most of the time, or (b) have to eat their own food most of the time.

Eugene, like the college town it is, has its share of pizza places. Lots of them. All over the place. And unless you eat nothing but pizza every evening for a month, you may have a little trouble finding the Perfect Pizza. So we at *distractions* decided to save you some work (and indigestion), and do some of the searching for you. The story of our quest is thusly named...

In Search of the Perfect Pizza

Before we started our search, we set down some ground rules. Since we didn't have the stomach (or the money) to try the wares from each of the 31 pizza places in the Eugene-Springfield area listed in the Yellow Pages, we limited our search to those places within a one-mile radius of the University.

To be sure that we weren't given preferential treatment, we ordered the pizzas to go under a person's name, never letting on what we were up to (although there were some suspicious glances when we asked for a small pizza and about twenty napkins).

Of course, our judges (six typical students... hungry students) came into the competition with their own biases and ideas of the "perfect pizza," and it's a little hard to pretend you don't know which restaurant the pizza came from when there's a huge blue and white domino on the top of the box. But everyone was told to base their judgements only on the particular pizza being judged, and not on previous experiences.

Among the many Things In Life That People Will Never Agree On is the perfect pizza topping. One of our judges loved Canadian bacon, pepperoni, sausage and beef. Together. One hated tomatoes. One loved tomatoes. One

turned up her nose at anything without olives and mushrooms. And one wanted (yecch) anchovies. To try to keep things fair, and fairly edible, we ordered half pepperoni and half Canadian bacon and tomato whenever possible. While no one was overjoyed, all the pizza got eaten. Eventually.

OUR FIRST STOP, for no particular reason, was the East Broadway Pizzeria. East Broadway strives for Chicago-ness, from its pictures of mayor Daley to the way it cuts its pizza. "My first impression," announced our anchovy-lover, "is that it's square."

"This really is a weird way to slice it," Ann-chovy agreed. "When you get to the center piece, there's no way to hold it without getting your fingers gooey."

After some comments on what pizza really is like on the

East Coast, we settled down to some serious eating. "The spice in this is really well done," offered the anchovy-lover. "Yeah, it's not too much," the leader agreed. "It doesn't blow your mouth away. It tastes Italian."

"But it's supposed to taste Chicagoan," someone else protested. "Tastes more like Chef Boy Ar Dee to me," said The Connoisseur, still a little miffed that his favorite pizza hadn't been in the one-mile area.

"I like it when the sauce gets on my chin," grinned Mr. Cheese broadly. The rest of us stared at him for a moment, then returned to our pizza.

"The crust is the worst part," decided The Connoisseur. "It tastes too much like biscuits." "And the stuff (topping) just kinda sits on top of the crust. It's not an integral part of the pizza itself," added the anchovy-lover. "Let's rate it."

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