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Streetside Pizza opens to hot demand

Food stand receiving more than 150 orders daily after late-April opening

Story and Photos by Luke Whittaker
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OCEAN PARK — Dave Allen wasn't sure what to expect when he opened his Ocean Park pizza stand in late April. However, all his questions were answered after his first few hours of business.

"It's been absolutely nuts," Allen, 56, said in between preparing pizzas Wednesday, April 29 at Streetside Pizza in Ocean Park.

"We've been getting more calls than we can handle."

From 0 to 100

Their first official day was Wednesday, April 22, and by Friday (April 24) the pizza stand was receiving more than 150 orders daily on their sole phone line.

Allen figured sales would be slow the first few days, especially opening midweek.

"We tried to do as soft opening as we could but it just blew up on Facebook," Allen said.

"The newness and the covid-19 outbreak has a lot to do with how busy we are."

Allen said the stand — with a separate building holding the pizza oven — can churn out about 100 pizzas a day. A majority of the orders have occurred Friday and Saturday.

"Friday and Saturday we had six pizzas in the oven at a time," said cook David Dinsmore.

It takes about 10 minutes to cook a pizza in the 550-degree oven, with Dinsmore manually rotating each pizza during the process.

Insulated bags, formerly used to deliver BBQ, are used to keep the pizzas hot while waiting for pickup.

The Beachcomber Combo (sausage, bacon, pepperoni, salami, red onion, mushroom, green pepper and olives) and The Carnivore (pepperoni, salami, Canadian bacon, Italian sausage and bacon) have emerged as early favorites.

Prices range from \$14.99 for a medium 14" 1-topping pizza to \$25.99 for a 16" signature pizza. Take and bake pizzas are also available at a \$3 discount. Homemade ice cream (\$4) is available for dessert.

Allen encourages customers to call ahead and keep trying if the line is busy, as they rely on one line to handle all orders.

Covid-19 closures allow Allen to focus on pizza

Allen has built a following for his BBQ and taco restaurants in downtown Long Beach over the past few years, but like many has since temporarily closed the businesses amid the covid-19 crisis, which relegated restaurants to carryout or delivery. He is tentatively planning to reopen both businesses in June, he said.



Streetside Pizza is located at 1910 Bay Ave. in Ocean Park offering carry out and take-and-bake pizza.



Streetside Pizza cook David Dinsmore pulls a pizza from the oven. Dinsmore can cook up to six pizzas at a time, each taking about 10 minutes in the 550-degree oven.



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Streetside Pizza
Dave Allen, owner
1910 Bay Ave., Ocean Park
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"Since we closed the other two restaurants because of the pandemic, we took that time to get this ready," Allen said, adding that he used to make pizza years ago. "It's a little easier to come up with new things with YouTube now. I can talk to other professionals."

Difference is in the dough

"It took quite a bit because it's a totally different pizza for takeout," Allen said. "It has to travel well and we formulated our dough to do that. We put a little olive oil on the crust so the moisture doesn't soak in and use state-of-the-art box liners to keep it from getting soggy or greasy."

The dough is made fresh daily, about 80 pounds, he said, adding that he hasn't had any issues obtaining ingredients, including flour.

The business eventually plans to expand the menu, including adding pasta and potentially stromboli.