



PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

best pizza

1. **Pizza Research Institute** 530 Blair Blvd. 343-1307. www.pizzaresearchinstitute.com
2. **Mezza Luna Pizzeria** 933 Pearl St., 684-8900; 2776 Shadow View Dr., 743-2999. www.mezzalunapizzeria.com
3. **Sy's New York Pizza** 1211 Alder St. 686-9598; 55 Silver Lane, 654-0603. www.sysnewyorkpizza.com

Pear and garlic! On a pizza! PRI has always been good, but its new location makes it even better. Patrons will actually experience daylight at the pizzeria's new spot on Blair Boulevard in the bohemian sprawl known as the Whiteaker. PRI is not a place for pizza cowards, so be bold. Say yes to that weird, unpronounceable vegetable the chef wants to mix in with a cheese you've never heard of and ... an apricot? Why not? You will never go back to regular pizza.

sweet mixture that can simultaneously give an unwary gulper brain freeze and hot pepper mouth. Best to sip this pineapple/jalapeno treat slowly enough to swirl the flavors, taste the sweetness and truly experience the kick.

best thai

1. **Ta Ra Rin Thai Cuisine** 1200 Oak St. 343-1230. www.tararinthai.com
2. **Sweet Basil Thai Cuisine** 941 Pearl St., 284-2944; 1219 Alder St. www.sweetbasileug.com
3. **Chao Pra Ya Thai Cuisine** 580 Adams St. 344-1706.

best asian that's not thai or sushi

1. **Lotus Garden Vegetarian Restaurant** 810 Charnelton St. 344-1928.
2. **Yi Shen Vietnamese Restaurant** 1915 W. 11th Ave. 683-9386.
3. **Toshi's Ramen** 1520 Pearl St. 683-7833. www.myspace.com/toshisramen

Nom! Look, if you wanted meat, you'd go somewhere that offered cow, pig or bird flesh (like the number 2 and 3 in this list). That ain't happening at Lotus Garden, which offers a peaceful oasis for all-vegetarian lunch or dinner. You can ID the brown protein as wheat gluten instead of "beef of questionable origin," and even if you don't know how wheat gluten gets made, you can be pretty sure it doesn't involve taking a stun gun to the heads of wheat and sending them through a slaughtering process.

Veggie and meat options abound at Pho Yi Shen in its adorable new location, and

staff picks

best guilt-free quick mart

With its yin-yang collision of unrepentant 7-11 crap and dogmatic health foody-ism, the New Frontier Market on 8th and Van Buren brilliantly caters to the very worst and very best in our collective nature, as conspicuous and conscientious consumers, respectively. Where else can you grab, all in one five-minute stroll, a pack of cigarettes, a four-dollar bottle of wine and a frozen Frisbee of Totina's pizza, along with some organically grown local produce, an aromatic stick of Nag Champa and a bottle of enhanced acidophilus milk? Dr. Bronner's and Dr. Pepper, Karl Marx and Adam Smith, all frolicking within arm's reach: It's the American Dream made manifest, an earthly realm of guilt-free bargain hunting where flax seed oil and Necco wafers live in perfect symbiosis and happy harmony. *New Frontier Market*, 1101 W. 8th Ave.; 345-7401.

best place to take little tykes fishing

The Canoe Canal in Alton Baker Park is stocked often with legal-sized trout, and even steelhead sometimes find their way up the canal. Fish from the bank with worms and bobbers, or paddle up the canal and hang out with the blue herons.

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www.anightofbliss.com



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