



PHOTO COURTESY JAMES REXROAD / SIZZLE PIE

SIZZLIN' SOUTH

**PORTLAND'S SIZZLE PIE TO OPEN
EUGENE LOCATION** BY KEVIN PIASKOWSKI

Can you smell it yet? Are you catching the waft of fresh, authentic pizza pies slowly migrating down from Eugene's northern sibling city? If not, then expect them to arrive soon to add to Eugene's unique set of pizza places. Portland's overwhelmingly popular pizza haven, Sizzle Pie, is opening a new location in the heart of downtown Eugene.

As if it was a sort of culinary battle cry, Sizzle Pie boldly declares, "Death to false pizza!" The Portland-born-and-bred company is dedicated to changing the way we think about (and eat) pizza. With an expansive menu that accommodates carnivores, vegetarians and vegans alike, Sizzle Pie's alternative approach can appeal to the diverse masses. Couple that with hours that span from lunch to late as hell and a location right smack in the center of Eugene's downtown bar scene, pizza won't be much of a hard sell.

"We have always loved coming down to Eugene," says Bob Peyton, director of operations. "We've seen it grow and want to be part of the great expansion of the downtown area. We thought it was a really good fit for our style."

On the appeal of downtown, Peyton says, "It has a really good energy; it's infectious." Moreover, Peyton believes that the Sizzle Pie menu will appeal to the Eugene community. "I think people are going to be pretty impressed," Peyton adds. "We want to bring a different take on pizza."

Sizzle Pie owners pride themselves on its recipes, atmosphere and culture. "We work really hard on our menu," Peyton says. "The menu includes recipes like the 'Don Caballero,' a combination of pepperoni, sausage, green peppers and onion, or the Wu-Tang inspired '36 Chambers,' an assembly of cilantro pepita pesto, olive oil and ricotta. Vegans will find solace in pies with ingredients like Daiya vegan cheese and creamy basil cashew spread. Moreover, they offer a gluten-free option.

While pizza is, of course, the focal point of Sizzle Pie, Peyton takes the atmosphere and service just as seriously. "I think we've become popular because our service is good, our employees are passionate and we set a good mood," he says. "I think it's that ethos that we create that makes it pretty unique. We want to bring the 'pizza party' on a daily basis whether it's 11 am or 3:30 am and you're just coming in for a slice." ■

Sizzle Pie is expected to open at 910 Willamette St. in March but is currently under construction and acquiring permits. See sizzlepie.com for menu and info.

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