

THE WHIT

The Wheel Apizza is 'New Haven' style

BY RACHAEL CARNES

The Wheel Apizza Pub aims to fling a new kind of pie our way with their "New Haven" pizzas, and with crunchy, sourdough crust and an on-site brewery, this new joint is a little slice of heaven.

Owner Steve Mertz (you know him from Tacovore and Laughing Planet before that) spent his formative high school years in New Haven, Connecticut, frequenting iconic pizza spots like Peppy's, and NYC's Lombardi's.

"New Haven pizza has its own style," Mertz says, "with a longer ferment on the dough, and it's not shy about the tomato sauce."

The Wheel's self-identified "pizzolo" is Paul Adkins, who's in the kitchen every morning, prepping the restaurant's distinctive sourdough crusts and fresh toppings.

Made with wheat from Junction City's own Camas Country Mill, the light, tangy dough is special — and cooked hotter than most, creating a tasty texture and flavor.

"The sourdough crust has more character," Mertz says. "It's more rustic."

And delicious.

I sampled the pepperoni pizza, generously dolloped with fresh mozzarella cheese and dotted with moist, succulent bite-sized pepperonis. Rich and multidimensional, this favor combo packs the yin/yang balance of savory and sweet. I could eat it for days.

The potato pesto pie features kale, leeks, rosemary and a house-made ricotta, melding together in a come-to-mama alchemy. Add a farm fresh egg baked on top for two bucks.

My favorite pie — so far — is the portobello and pear.

Rich, gooey "oregonzola" cheese pairs with mushroom, sweet pear, spicy arugula, all brought together with a refreshing hit of balsamic reduction. It's like eating summer. And on a crust that's thin and light, yet satisfying, this really would make a marvelous meal as the temperatures climb.

The Wheel offers mix and match "dream pies" of your choosing, and with seasonal beers brewed onsite and a full bar, it should leave everyone in your party satisfied. The location's delightful: a converted warehouse, with careful attention to design making the restaurant feel light, bright and friendly. On any given night, you'll find families and friends enjoying themselves as they watch the trains roll by.

The Wheel Apizza Pub is open 11 am to 10 pm every day at 390 Lincoln Street; 541-735-3860, thewheelapizzapub.com.



Ad Council

**WHEN YOU see
BULLYING,
use THIS
EMOJI
TO do SOMETHING
ABOUT it.**

I AM A WITNESS
IWitnessBullying.org

**IZAKAYA
MEIJI
COMPANY**

**Delicious
SPIRITS
&
COCKTAILS**

Nightly Specials

**JAPANESE
SMALL PLATES**

Open Late Every Night 5pm-1am
Ramen & Gyoza After 11pm

345 VAN BUREN · IZAKAYAMEIJI.COM