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This Month's Issue



MY TURN

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MARK ESTEE, OWNER & CHEF, CAMPO, RENO, NEVADA, TALKS PIZZA QUALITY CONTROL & AUTHENTICITY



By Mark Estee / Owner Campo



As a restaurant operator and chef, I want to make people happy by cooking great food and serving it to them in a relaxed, neighborhood environment. That's why we created Campo here in Reno, Nevada.

Pasta, pigs, produce and pizza are my passions, so when I looked at the market here in Reno, I saw the opportunity to create an authentic Neopolitan Pizza. A few years ago I tasted and learned about Vera Pizza Napoletana, or VPN. I went to Italy and was amazed at all the little



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nuances in the pizza, but true to VPN, the basics were cast in stone. I like that. I like the fact we can rely on a recipe from 1868, with all its history and traceable roots. In the world of pizza, we all know everyone has his or her favorite recipe or style. I can appreciate that. The thing I love about this style of pizza is that it lends itself to age-old techniques and artisan production. Pasta, pigs, produce and pizza are my passions, so when I looked at the market here in Reno, I saw the opportunity to create an authentic Neopolitan Pizza. A few years ago I tasted and learned about Vera Pizza Napoletana, or VPN. I went to Italy and was amazed at all the little nuances in the pizza, but true to VPN, the basics were cast in stone. I like that. I like the fact we can rely on a recipe from 1868, with all its history and traceable roots. In the world of pizza, we all know everyone has his or her favorite recipe or style. I can appreciate that. The thing I love about this style of pizza is that it lends itself to age-old techniques and artisan production.

To me, you can taste it all in the dough — the look, the smell, the taste. Not everyone agrees, and critics may rant and rave about the best way or the better way, but I say fuuuuugeettaaboooouuutt it! I love our pizza, but it's not beyond reproach. I recently invited the VPN to take a look at my pizza operation. As a result, we made some slight tweaks to the dough — and, I have to say, it is even better than before!

So, even as people wanted me to change the pizza, or try a different style, I did not waver. Instead I looked deeply at what we were doing and made changes based on the traditions we are rooted in. Not everybody will notice the changes we've made. But that is OK, it is like a great haircut — you are not supposed to be able to tell. The lesson to me is, while I always listen to my customers, I have to stand by what I love and what I believe to be true and taste DELICIOUS!

In This Issue

