



3 Seattle Serious Pie

LOCALE: 316 Virginia St., tomdouglas.com

BREED: Artisanal, individually hand-shaped pizzas.

METHOD: Handmade pies fired for seven minutes at 675 degrees in a stone-encased, apple-wood-burning oven.

CHARACTERISTICS: Chef Tom Douglas can seriously cook. Winner of multiple James Beard awards, Douglas is one of the biggest tastemakers in the Northwestern cuisine scene. His irregularly shaped pizzas begin sans cheese in the less intensely heated front of the oven, which gives the crust and toppings a chance to caramelize. About three-fourths of the way through, cheese is added and the pie is moved to the piping hot back of the oven. This gives the cheese just enough time to melt, not brown and bubble, allowing it to maintain its flavor and integrity along with a slightly denser, less charred crust. Douglas' dough recipe is also

tweaked to create a softer pillow inside the crisp roll of the outer edges of the crust, a real game-changer with the cheesier pizzas on the menu.

A LITTLE ELBOW GREASE: Douglas isn't yoked to anything other than his own standards. Even though he touts Serious

This page: 1 A house-cured guanciale pie with baby arugula and eggs. 2 Making the pie. **3** Seattle cool. **Opposite:** 4 A Serious pizza oven.



Pie as a casual, fun eatery, the ingredients are nothing but fresh and local. That means growing produce at Douglas's farm in Prosser, Washington, procuring local mushrooms—such as chanterelles and morels—from Seattle-based Foraged and Found Edibles, and creating his own charcuterie in-house. The dough, made in Dahlia Bakery next door, is derived after two days of fermentation. All of this adds up to a pretty serious pizza experience.

WHAT TO ORDER: Be sure to check out the Yukon gold potato and rosemary pie, or the fantastically complex, house-cured guanciale pie with baby arugula and two eggs, which are cracked over the top and roast as the pizza bakes. Dunking my crust into the runny yolks brought me back to my first Pizza Bismarck I ate in the Tyrol as a youngster. This serious pie was easily the best pizza I ate all last year.

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS: This pizza joint is cozy, outfitted with mostly family-sized groaning tables, so come prepared to sit elbow to elbow with your neighbor. While you may not enjoy a stranger eavesdropping on your conversation, it's the perfect setup for scoping out what everyone else ordered.



PHOTOS: DANIELLE LEAVELL