

SATURDAY
FORM
GUIDE

No way to top new wave of pizzas



CIAO BELLI CAFE (RAY'S PIZZA), BALGOWLAH

Chef and owner Ray Gennaro loves the Tre Coloni pizza, which refers to the three colours of the Italian flag. It's a "summery pizza salad" with rocket, bocconcini and tomato.



MELTHOUSE PIZZA AND PASTA, KINGSGROVE

The fiery Chili Billy is a hit with customers but owner Levant Akdeniz has a soft spot for his New Orleans pizza which is smothered with marinated chicken and barbecue sauce.



CALABRIA PIZZA CAFE, MANLY VALE

The Manly Vale pizza place prides itself on creating everything from the ground up, including the timber oven. Manager Cirilo Roppa says the eggplant pizza is a thriller.



IL CUGINO, LEICHHARDT

Charlie Pignatoro's mum still cooks at the Leichhardt restaurant, opened 24 years ago by his parents. Home-styled Capricciosa and Napolitana are most popular.



CHRIS'S PIZZERIA, MAROUBRA

Manager Maria Repeti says the consistency of the tasty pizzas, with a mix of traditional and gourmet slices, is why customers have been flowing in for 28 years.



GIGINO, FAIRFIELD WEST

Gigino opened just three months ago and is already much loved. Manager Attilio Labbozzetta says the lightness of the dough allows customers to truly savour all the toppings.



ALLEGRIA RISTORANTE, NORTH RYDE

The Flamenca pizza – chicken, chorizo and Italian sausage – rates highly among customers. Manager Frederick Chanesia cites the warmth of the restaurant as a drawcard.



CHRISTO'S PIZZERIA, PADDINGTON

Sprinkled with jalapenos, feta, and chorizo, the El Diablo is a much loved topping. Manager Peter Poulos says customers are demanding fresher, higher-quality ingredients.



RENE'S PIZZA, BLACKTOWN

A pizza heartland in Blacktown, Rene's Pizza has generated loyal customers for over three decades. It now features a gluten-free range, with vegetarian the favourite.



PIZZA ROCCO, ST CLAIRS

"We cook like we cook at home," manager Rocco Colosi says. The aptly named Colosi topping consisting of salami, chilli and caramelised onion is a favourite among diners.

ROSEMARIE LINTINI & STEPHANIE HAMMA

CULINARY traditionalists say putting pineapple on pizza and calling it "Hawaiian" is a crime against food.

These are usually people who don't like anything except sauce and cheese.

But these days anything edible seems to make it on top — or inside the crust — of a pizza, from chocolate to corn chips to creamy chicken.

The hottest ingredients are inspired by Latin American cuisine, including chorizo, jalapenos and chipotle, Food Service Magazine editor Anthony Huckstep said.

"We're seeing spicier concoctions on pizzas, a bit of the Americas and South America, and a lot more American-style flat pizzas. Anything that gives a bit of a spicy twist," he said.

Mr Huckstep said pizza was more popular than ever because it is affordable and tasty. "Pizza is that ultimate food for sharing. It cuts through

economical boundaries. No matter what demographic, pizza has always been affordable and delicious," he said.

"Operators are selling pizzas the way cafes offer breakfast — you can choose your own pizza toppings. It creates the perception of value when customers create what they're about to eat."

At Rene's Pizz in Blacktown, the gluten-free range has become as popular as traditional vegetarian pizzas.

"The majority of our customers are regulars," partner-owner Vince Varnabaccia said. Customers rave about Cirilo Roppa's eggplant pizza at Calabria Pizza Cafe at the Manly Vale Bowling Sports

and Social Club, which creates everything from the ground up.

Locals flock to Pizza Rocco in St Clair for "home-style" pizzas, including the signature Colosi with salami, chilli and caramelised onion.

"We cook like we do at home," Rocco Colosi said.