

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2012

Thin Crust Pizza Amazingness at Basil Brick Oven



Yesterday, my We Heart Astoria colleagues, Meg and Mackenzi and I celebrated another awesome Queens Blogger Social with like-minded bloggers, who write about food, culture, the arts and more. What I love about these gatherings is of course the networking aspect and the sharing of common experiences, but aside from that, it's also being able to enjoy Astoria's amazing food.

This month's social was held at the newly expanded Basil Brick Oven Pizza, which is totally awesome, and we were all excited to see that they brought their A-game last night, with both the food and the hospitality. There's a lot of new things we tried, and tons that we'll still have to have next time, giving us more reasons to come back. But without further ado, here are the delectable goodies we devoured:

Antipasti - We received two generous helpings of antipasti, both of which were really bright in color and flavor. The first was the piece-de-resistance, fig/pineapple/prosciutto platter and the second was a classic tomato, mozzarella, basil salad (aka Caprese salad). I really enjoyed both dishes, but the first was a complete standout, the figs sweet as candy and really tender to the bite. While you normally wouldn't eat the skin of a fig, this was absolutely an occasion where you could, and I personally couldn't resist. The salty prosciutto that was served on top of this dish made for a lovely combination of sweet and savory. It also has to be said that the figs were as fresh as can be, and sourced from Basil Brick's very own backyard garden.



The Caprese, also sourced from their local tomatoes and basil was amazingly clean tasting, refreshing and a great way to start this pizzalicious meal. It was also nice because our vegetarian friends got to enjoy it, guilt free.

Pizza - With over 40 varieties of pizza, our guests got to choose the pizza of their liking, and because these pies are great for sharing, we each got to try more than one. Veggie options were very popular at my side of the table, and I went for a veggie pizza as well to keep it semi-light. I say "semi" as my dish incorporated gorgonzola cheese, so I didn't give up too much in terms of indulgence.

So...I went with the Pera & Gorgonzola pie, which included sweet Williams Pears, homemade fresh mozzarella, creamy gorgonzola, parmigiano and basil. Holy moly, was this good! I loved the juxtaposition of sweet and savory, with the pear and cheese, and the gorgonzola especially brought a very decadent, luxurious flavor to the pie. The soft texture of the pear was interesting as well, and it felt as if it was literally melting on your tongue.

The other pizza variety I tried was also a veggie slice, simply called "Basil." This one boasted a bright pesto sauce, homemade mozzarella, thin slices of oven baked rosemary potatoes and pine nuts. The combination was interesting, and each ingredient really complimented the other, the fresh basil offsetting the heartiness of the potatoes. I liked that it didn't contain a traditional red sauce, which also made the pizza a lot lighter - not to mention its airy, slightly charred crust, which also lightened things up.

Dessert - How could we end this already perfect meal without another form of Basil Brick's signature food...pizza?! We of course did just that by devouring their chocolate pizza pie. Obscenely incredible, this pizza was even more delicious than their savory options, the crust being even thinner and stuffed with a thin layer of chocolate (and hazelnut) spread. What was key is that they didn't overdo it, and each slice went down easily, making us reach for another, which we naturally used as a scoop for all that fresh whipped cream in the middle.

Service and Cost:

Basil Brick's hospitality was absolutely lovely, as they took great care of us from start to finish. From replenishing our drinks without us having to say a word to nicely spacing out a very generous meal, we were all satisfied and felt like home. I think that's the vibe they're going for here, and I can confidently say it was achieved.

Costs are really affordable, as we worked out a competitive prix-fixe menu for our guests. While each deal is unique in its own way, I must stress that Basil Brick is extremely flexible and they're willing to do everything for their guests. If you're looking to have a private party or to host a bigger dinner there, I'd highly recommend reaching out to them. And please tell them who sent you.

3 Saucy (and cheesy) Mmmms

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