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Ignite Your Life

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Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza
It's pizza well done, thanks to a coal oven.

food ROB KALESSE



The delicious broccoli rabe and sausage pie, from Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza, a Florida chain with a brand-new Delaware location on Concord Pike.

Job (and pie) well done at Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza

When it comes to baking a pizza pie, we're pretty sure we've seen every style under the sun, from the conveyor belt electric ovens and gas-powered double-deckers, to the brick ovens of old and even the wood-fired grills.

That is, we thought we'd seen (and tasted) every style imaginable, until we ventured up Concord Pike last week to Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza, a Florida chain in business since 2002 which has just opened its first Delaware location.

The cleaner-burning fossil fuel, heating up their ovens to 800 degrees (according to their Web site), is more environmentally friendly than the standard wood or gas-fired grills. Also important, the hot coal oven gives the pie crust a crunchy texture, hence their clever motto, "Pizza well done."

Ready for some crispy crust, our foursome arrived at the north side of the Brandywine Town Center, where Anthony's shares the shopping center with Sullivan's Steakhouse and Trader Joe's. We were immediately met by a very attentive staff, who opened doors for us and greeted us kindly.

While we knew going in that all their pizzas were coal-fired, we were surprised to find that Anthony's chicken wings (\$8.95 for a 10-piece small order; \$14.95 for a 20-piece large order), served with caramelized onions and focaccia bread, were also cooked in the coal oven.

Our party dove into the crispy wings, grabbing a slice of the crunchy bread and sweet onions to boot. Marinated in olive oil, lemon, garlic, salt and pepper, the wings offered a subtle flavor. Though they lacked any dipping sauce, the onions offered plenty of juices to keep things from getting dried out.

As we sat and chowed down on the chicken wings, we were a little perturbed that the sodas we ordered came in individual 20-ounce bottles (\$2.50 each). Frankly, we're the type who prefer fountain sodas and plenty of free refills. However, we were pleasantly surprised to learn that they also serve up beer and wine.

Our three pizzas arrived, including the specialty **broccoli rabe and sausage** and **eggplant Marino** (both \$15.95 for a small, \$18.95 for a large) and a "lunch size" pizza with mushrooms (\$7.25).

The broccoli rabe and sausage (pictured) was served with garlic, olive oil and fresh tomato sauce that covered a crispy crust, while large chunks of sausage (made with fennel) and crunchy broccoli rabe cloaked the 12-inch pie.

As for the eggplant Marino (named after famed Miami Dolphins quarterback Dan Marino), there were long, thick slices of eggplant all over the pizza, along with plenty of tomato sauce and Romano cheese, which is apparently "Mr. Marino's favorite," according to one employee.

The lunch size pie passed the mushroom test, in that the veggies were fresh and certainly not canned. And the one sandwich we ordered, the **Italian tuna salad** (\$7.95), with lemon, olive oil, tomato and arugula, was a hit considering the lack of mayo, and we liked it more than we thought we would.

What can we say? The coal-fire oven was a hit. From the crispy wings to the crunchy bread and well done pizza crust, we were glad to have discovered this new style of cooking. Next time in, we'll have to order one of their coal cooked calzones.

ANTHONY'S COAL FIRED PIZZA

5611 Concord Pike
Wilmington
477-1488
www.anthonyscoalfiredpizza.com

Hours: 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Sun-Thu;
11:30 a.m.-11 p.m. Fri & Sat

Cuisine
Pizza

Dress Code
Casual

Prices
lunch specials: \$4.95-\$8.50
pizzas: \$11.50-\$18.95
salads and sandwiches: \$6.95-\$9.95

Payment
■ MC ■ Visa
■ AmEx ■ Discover

What you need to know

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good wine list |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lunch | <input type="checkbox"/> Cool cocktails |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dinner | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open seven days |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late-night eats | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeans are OK |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small plates | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor seating |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dine at the bar | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Romantic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dessert menu |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good for kids | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Veggie friendly |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good for groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Make reservations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open for parties | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Takeout |

INSIDER TIPS

Lunch Specials

Their lunch special menu, served from 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. daily, features cheaper specialty pies, salads and sandwiches.



Server Kristen Spears smiles for the camera.