



Offering a family-friendly atmosphere and a good time in Crestline Village

by *Carla Jean Whitley*

Although the second location of this Nashville-based pizzeria has only been open since this summer, Mafiaoza's has begun building a reputation in its Crestline Village neighborhood. The original restaurant's owners have friends in Mountain Brook and suspected it would be a great location for their second restaurant—a suspicion that's proving true. The Mafia-themed menu and warm, welcoming atmosphere invite patrons to linger over pizza and pasta dishes.

The spacious dining area wasn't crowded during a recent rainy day lunchtime visit. Service was attentive and we were in and out within an hour and a half, even though we ordered three courses and I lingered over coffee.

My friend and I launched into lunch with the bruschette, a dish the waiter warned us was not like the bruschetta you expect at most Italian restaurants. The appetizer has an almost sculptural quality, and I joked about snapping a picture with my camera phone to preserve its beauty. Two oversized triangles of focaccia were arranged on the plate, topped with Gorgonzola cheese and a colorful tomato relish. It's difficult to eat—we broke out the forks and knives, and at home with leftovers I resorted to using my hands to scoop up all of the tomato-y goodness. But the experience is worthwhile.

We split a pizza—the Irate Italian, in the Capone (12 inch) size—for our main course. The thin but chewy crust is topped with tomato sauce, garlic, black olives, parmesan and mozzarella cheeses. Though we had plowed through both appetizer and entrée, we saved room for dessert. A chocolate mousse cake is perfect for splitting.



“We kind of consider ourselves a value proposition because we do have large portions. The pizzas are not exorbitantly priced,” explains General Manager Jim Colwell. They're certainly succeeding on that end. A friend and I split an appetizer, pizza and dessert—and were left with two take out boxes!—for about \$30.

It's also a gas-saving proposition for neighborhood residents. Crestline families have already started to arrive on bicycles and with strollers in tow. “We're really trying to create a place where families can come,” Colwell says. And he adds that after bedtime, the restaurant draws another crowd to its spacious bar area.

“We want to be the neighborhood pizzeria,” Colwell says. “We want to be like neighbors, like friends, like family.”

Details:

Mafiaoza's Pizzeria and Neighborhood Pub

2 Dexter Ave., Crestline Village

Hours: Tues.-Thurs. 11 a.m.-10:30 p.m.;

Fri.-Sat. 11 a.m.-midnight;

Sun. 11 a.m.-10:30 p.m.

www.mafiaozas.com