

Nima's Pizza keeps them coming back

BY ROB ROEDEL

When people think of Arkansas' Twin Lakes area of Mountain Home and Bull Shoals, visions of mountains, lakes and rivers in the beautiful Ozark Mountains come to mind. After visiting the area, all I can think about is Nima's Pizza in Gassville – the home of the pizza that won the 2010 USA Best Traditional Pizza Award at the International Pizza Challenge.

Like many residents of the area, Rick and Jane Mines began visiting the Mountain Home area for fishing trips. They always stopped by Nima's Pizza to get their favorite pizza before they began their fishing adventure. The Las Vegas natives decided to retire to the area and purchased a

Sonya Milligan of Yellville (right), a regular customer, is presented with her pizza by Theresa McNutt of Nima's.



the eating essentials

NIMA'S PIZZA & MORE, INC.

109 South School St., Gassville
870.435.6828
www.nimaspizza.com

Hours of Operation

Monday - Saturday: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

home in Gassville. And, with a little encouragement from Nima's original owners, they purchased the establishment in 2003.

"We had not operated a restaurant, but we both loved to cook," Rick said. "We purchased the original recipes, but we have worked to improve them during the past nine years. We constantly tweak the recipes to see if we can improve on them."

Each pizza is hand-tossed. Rick prefers the "up" toss, which involves tossing the dough up in the air, while Jane uses the "side-to-side" toss method. Either way, it is entertaining to watch.

During a recent visit, Rick and Jane told me they were going to prepare the pizza that won the 2010 International Pizza Challenge. They request advance notice if you plan to order this pizza. As I watched them work side-by-side to prepare this beautiful pizza, I could see why they have been so successful. They prepare each pizza and other menu items as works of art, and they use variations of olive oils to give the food unique and distinctive flavors.

The winning pizza features a crust that rises for a day. It is then topped with a secret pizza sauce, a layer of sliced Italian ham flavored lightly with mild black pepper, a "50-50" blend of mozzarella and provolone cheeses and a lattice layer of red peppers that are roasted for four hours. The lattice openings are filled with balls of five Italian cheeses (four aged cheeses and one milder cheese).

As Rick presented the pizza at my table, he said, "Now comes the hard



This culinary work of art won the "Best in the U.S. Traditional Style Pizza" and "Second Best in the World" at the 2010 International Pizza Challenge.

part. Cutting it." I knew exactly what he meant. The pie was a culinary masterpiece.

As I tried the first piece of pizza I was impressed with the crust. It was not too thin, not too thick and cooked perfectly. The cheeses blended perfectly with the other toppings. I have never had a pizza that tasted as good as this one.

I then tried the "Piggly Wiggly." This pizza was a more traditional pie with pepperoni, sausage, double bacon and double cheese. It was also delicious.

But there's more than pizza here. The shop features a bakery case to display the Italian desserts that Jane prepares daily. I sampled a cream puff and two cannoli pastries. Jane prepares other desserts including cheesecakes, scones and turnovers.

The couple enjoys providing the restaurant's growing customer base with perfect pizzas and other menu items each day. And the team at Nima's is very community-minded. After a tornado struck the town a few years ago, the staff voted to donate all gratuities and tips to the Salvation Army. Based on the steady stream of happy customers, dedication to the community and the fun attitude of the team at Nima's, the restaurant will continue to find success in Gassville. ■

Dining recommendations? Contact Rob Roedel at rroedel@aecc.com