

YOUR PIE

Every pizza is a one-of-a-kind culinary creation

by Christine Knapp

I always wanted to be a business owner," Jeff Rhoades recalls.

When this North Carolina native came to Hampton Roads after graduating from college in 1994, he had no idea that his love of pizza would end up being a guiding star in his career. In the twenty-five years since his arrival, Jeff has become something of a pioneer, bringing a unique, but quick and casual Italian dining experience to the area. He is now the proud owner of four Your Pie locations- the newest at Towne Place in Greenbrier.

The concept behind Your Pie is simple. Guests can build their own pizza, individually sized and made fresh to order. Patrons choose from 52 different pizza toppings and selections, building their own one-of-a-kind culinary creation. The ingredients are the freshest available and the dough is hand-tossed. After each pie is loaded with the selected toppings, it is baked at 575 degrees in Your Pie's fiery brick oven. The finished pizza is delivered to the customer's table in just four minutes.

In addition to pizza, Your Pie guests can choose from baked pasta bowls, paninis, chopped salads, sorbets, and gelato. These can be paired with an assortment of wines and craft beers.

"Our food is fantastic for adults, and kids love us, too," Jeff says with a smile. "We get fresh produce so our ingredients are always outstanding. We also make our own marinara sauce and salad dressings."

"We like to hand-toss our dough for two reasons," Jeff explains. "First, air gets into the dough when you're throwing and spinning it- the result being a crispy, yet still

chewy crust. The second reason we throw and hand-toss our dough is that kids love to watch it! For them, it's a show!"

"The dough is really the foundation of any good pizza, and we think that our secret dough recipe is the best around," Jeff continues. "We have white, wheat and gluten-free options as well as vegan cheese and dairy-free desserts. That means that anybody, even those with dietary restrictions, can still enjoy a pie here."

Your Pie's catering options abound. In addition to pizza, options include baked pasta, paninis, salads, desserts and more. "We also have a mobile pizza oven that allows us to cater everything from business lunches and birthday parties to sporting events and festivals," said Jeff. The mobile oven can travel to any location. Event guests can build their own personal pizzas, made fresh in the oven, right on site.

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During Your Pie's grand opening in Chesapeake, it hosted a "Dine and Donate" fundraiser, working with Chesapeake Public Schools to raise money for School Nutrition Services. For three days before opening, Your Pie offered free pizzas to patrons and in exchange, customers were encouraged to donate to the local public schools' lunch program. Over \$3,000 was raised to pay off student meal charges.



From left: Jeff Rhoades, owner of Your Pie, Holly Vesey, Ethan Brady and Mersades Beasley

Photo by Michele Thompson

"We're happy to support any local program or fundraiser through our "benefit nights," Jeff says. "If there is a group dedicated to doing good in our community that needs to raise some money, we will work with them. We give 15 percent of our proceeds back to the organization. We're excited and honored to have this new location in Greenbrier and we want to make a positive difference here."

Your Pie strives to be a family-friendly destination. Adjacent to the restaurant's dining area is a large private room. "That room is for birthday and team parties," Jeff explains. "Also, there's a new pizza making badge in the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts programs, so troops have been coming here to make their own pizzas and earn their pizza badge. It's been a real blast!"

When talking about his staff at the Greenbrier location, Jeff lights up. "We have an amazing team here," he says beaming. "These folks are the ones who make this place so special. We try to interact with every table. We make it a point to come out and check on all of our customers. We offer a friendly and welcoming environment, and

that's important to our patrons. Many of our staff members have been with us for a while: they've gone from team lead or shift lead to general manager. I believe our team's commitment to great service is evident in how well they treat our customers."

Holly Vesey, general manager of the Chesapeake location, agrees. "I love working here because of Jeff and the team," she says. "It's the people- the team and the customers- that bring me back every day."

Besides the food and the great service, an array of specials bring many customers back to Your Pie. Specials at the Chesapeake location include Hero Mondays, offering reduced rates on entries for military, first responders and teachers. Wine Wednesdays and Thursday Pi(e)nt Nights feature reduced wine and beer prices and trivia competitions. And, popular with families, Your Pie offers Kids Eat Free Sundays.

"Right now at our Chesapeake location, we're offering a weekday lunch special," Jeff adds. "Customers can choose any one sauce, one cheese, and one topping. It doesn't have to just be marinara, mozzarella, and pepperoni either. Customers can choose barbecue sauce, feta cheese, onions. Their pizza can be whatever they want it to be!"

The invitation to customers to think outside of the box and create a taste treat unlike anything they've had before is what makes dining at Your Pie so unique.

"That's what the experience here is supposed to be," Jeff concludes. "It's all about fun, fast, casual dining with exceptional customer service offering delicious food that won't break the bank."



Your Pie offers many catering options for any event, including a mobile pizza oven, pictured.

Your Pie

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