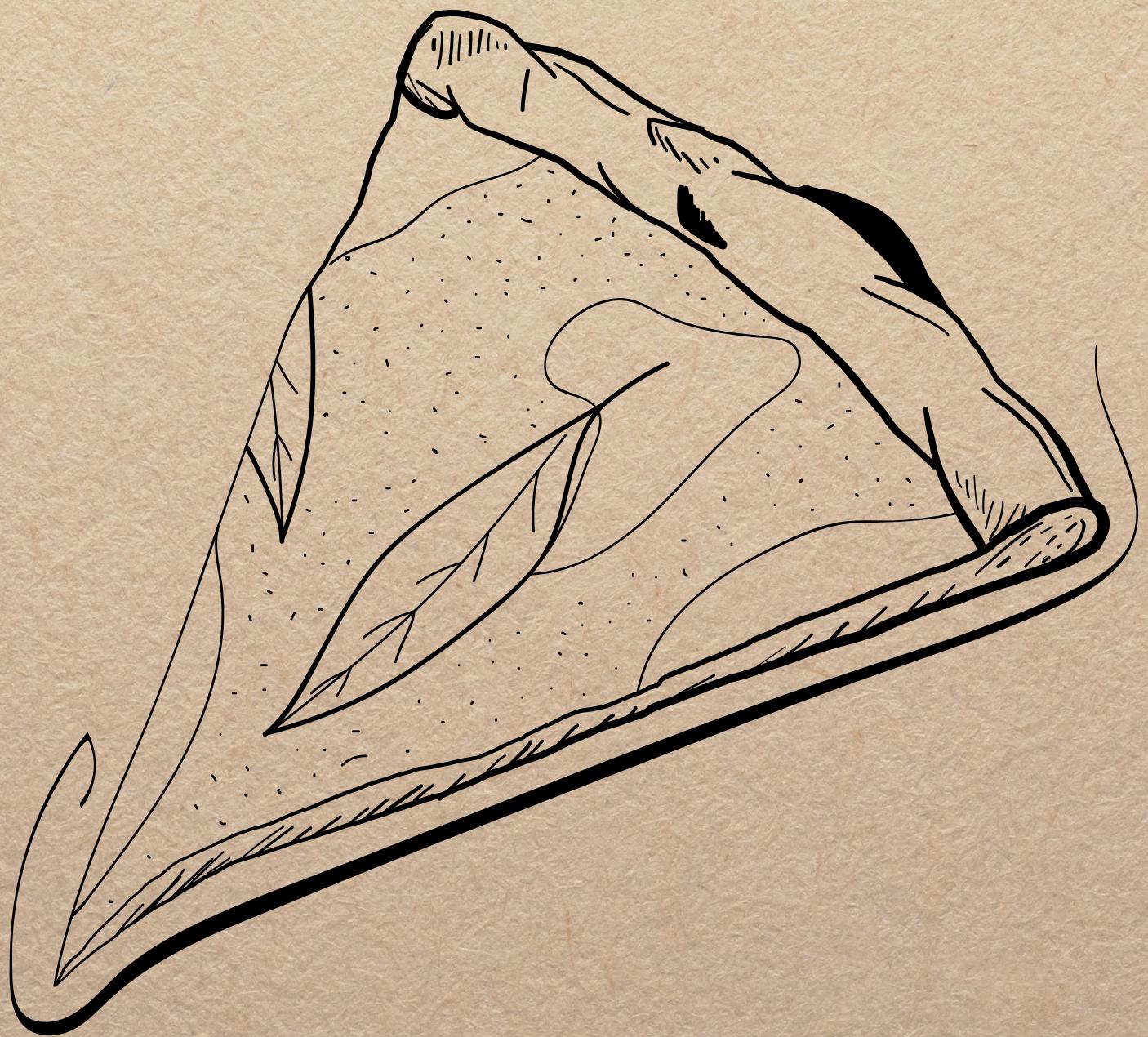


Pizziaolo



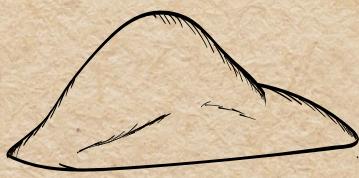
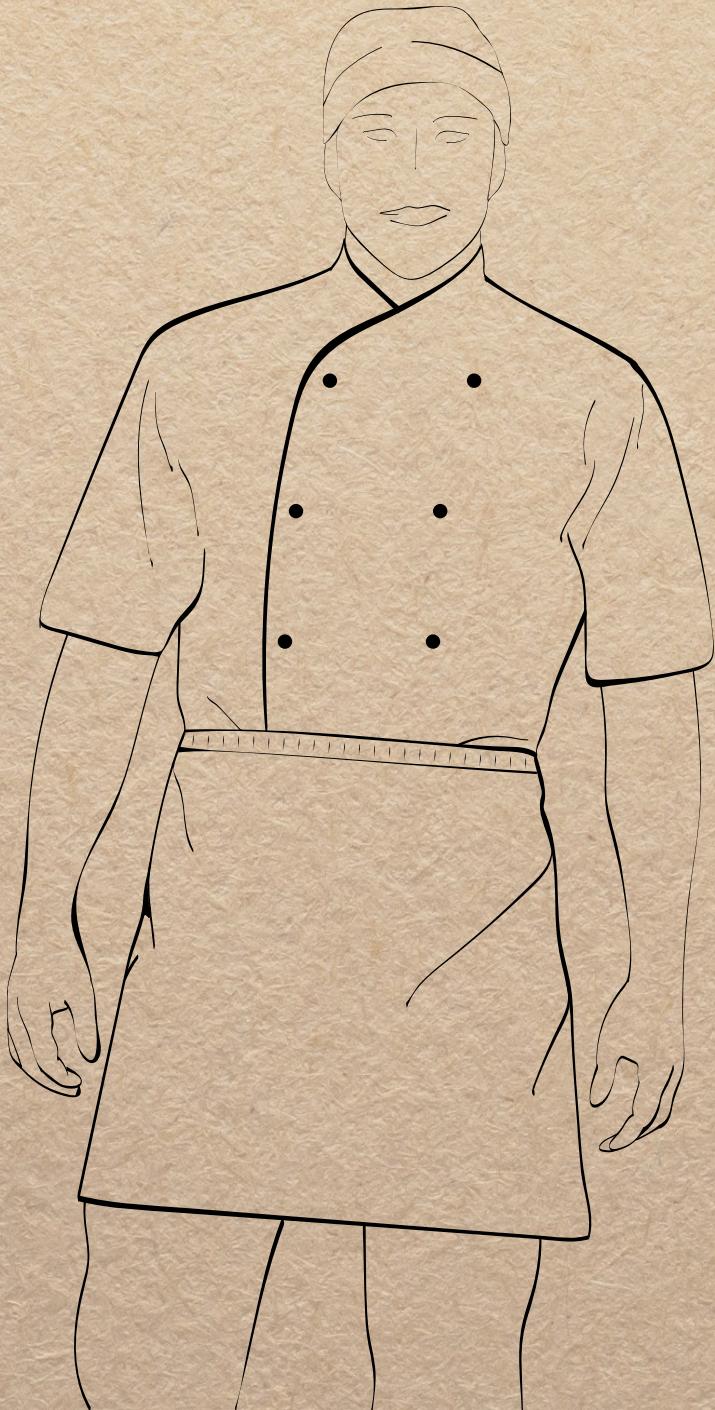


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Whats up with pizza and me?



Since the first time I tasted pizza, I was fond of it. However, it wasn't something special, it wasn't until I tried Neapolitan style pizza. It was around 2016-2017 that I applied to this pizzaria, honestly I didn't even know that it was a pizzaria to begin with. But after my orientation, I tried my first one and it instantly made itself part of my mind.

At the time, it I was just working to earn some money and the pizza was just there. One of the most fun parts of the job was stretching the dough and cooking the pizza. I never became tired of eating it. Even after I stopped working there, I frequently made visits. It was not until a few months into 2021 that I started to become obsessed with Neapolitan style pizza. I would look up youtube videos about it, about the ovens, about the dough, about various types of restaurants throughout the world. Then this crazy thought of opening a pizza place came into my mind.

With that thought becoming a future goal in my life, I remembered that there's this title of becoming a "Pizzaiolo", which means pizza maker or I like to say pizza master. I decided to back to the place where I first encounter this style of pizza. I asked if they could train me to become a pizzaiolo and exchanged I would work a couple of days for them. Since May 1st, 2021, I started on this path to become a pizzaiolo and this book highlights the most important things to learn to become a pizzaiolo

Traditions Neopolitan Pizza

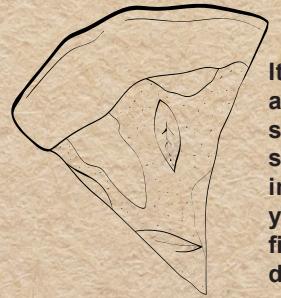
Neapolitan pizza, or pizza Napoletana, is a type of pizza that originated in Naples, Italy. This style of pizza is prepared with simple and fresh ingredients: a basic dough, raw tomatoes, fresh mozzarella cheese, fresh basil, and olive oil. No fancy toppings are allowed! One of its defining characteristics is that there is often more sauce than cheese. This leaves the middle of the pie wet or soggy and not conducive to being served by the slice. Because of this, Neapolitan pizzas are generally pretty small (about 10 to 12 inches), making them closer to the size of a personal pizza. Neapolitan pizzas are also cooked at very high temperatures (800 F to 900 F) for no more than 90 seconds.

Pizza as we know it today (dough topped with tomatoes and cheese) was invented in Naples. Before the 1700s, flatbreads existed but were never topped with tomatoes, which is now a defining characteristic of pizza. Tomatoes were brought to Europe in the 16th century by explorers returning from Peru. However, many Europeans believed tomatoes were poisonous until poor peasants in Naples began to top their flatbread with them in the late 18th century. The dish soon became popular. Many visitors to Naples would even seek out the poorer neighborhoods to try this local specialty. Marinara pizza does not have cheese. It received its name because it was traditionally prepared by "la marinara" (a seaman's wife) for her husband when he returned from fishing trips in the Bay of Naples. Baker Raffaele Esposito, who worked at the Naples pizzeria "Pietro... e basta così," is generally credited with creating Margherita pizza. In 1889, King Umberto I and Queen Margherita of Savoy visited Naples. Esposito baked them a pizza named in honor of the queen whose colors mirrored those of the Italian flag: red (tomatoes), white (mozzarella), and green (basil leaves).

This is what is now known as the classic Neapolitan pizza today. The Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana (VPN) was founded in 1984 in Naples. The organization's goal is to certify pizzerias that use the proper artisan traditions of authentic Neapolitan pizza. They have several requirements that must be met to gain certification, and restaurants must apply for it officially. They also have an American branch and there are currently only a few hundred restaurants in Italy and around the world that are VPN certified.

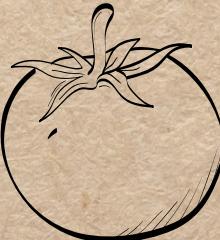
The official requirements of an authentic Neapolitan pizza begin with the crust. The dough must be made with highly refined Italian type 0 or 00 wheat flour, Neapolitan or fresh brewer's yeast (not dry yeast), water, and salt. It must be kneaded by hand or with a low-speed mixer and formed by hand, without the help of a rolling pin. The dough is topped with raw, pureed San Marzano tomatoes from Italy. It can use only two types of mozzarella cheese. One is fior di latte made from cow's milk and the other is mozzarella di Bufala, made from water buffalo milk, typically raised in the Campania and Lazio marshlands in Italy. Finally, Neapolitan pizza is topped off with fresh basil and extra-virgin olive oil. The ingredients must be all-natural and fresh. Neapolitan-style pizza typically consists of a thin and soft crust—if it is cooked properly at a high temperature, the crust will bubble up and be charred in spots. That is topped with a simple tomato sauce, fresh mozzarella cheese, and fresh basil.

Blazing Facts

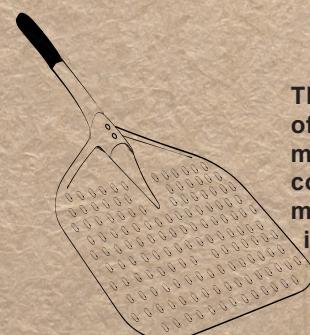


It takes 90 seconds or less to cook a pizza from start to finish. From stretching the dough, putting the sauce and toppings to finally cooking the pizza. Imagine, just ordering your pizza and once you are done filling up your drink, your pizza is done. How awesome is that!

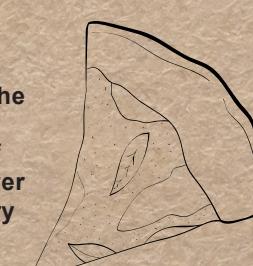
There are actual dough stretching competitions. In these events, contestants stretch the dough in a variety of ways. They choreograph a stretching routine, that involves music, tricks, dance. The person that stands out the best wins.



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The oven can reach temperatures of over 1000 degrees Fahrenheit, but must be maintained at 800 degrees to cook the pizza perfectly. The oven must be maintained dry, any moisture in the oven can crack it.

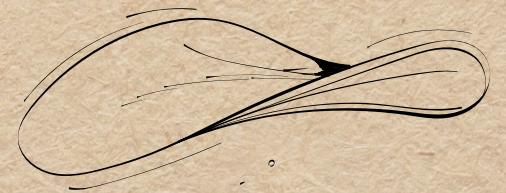


What's awesome about tradition, is that it can be broken. As good as the traditional Neapolitan pizzas taste, nowadays, you can get a variety of this type of style of pizza. If you ever get the chance, go to Naples and try what they offer.

Dough Management

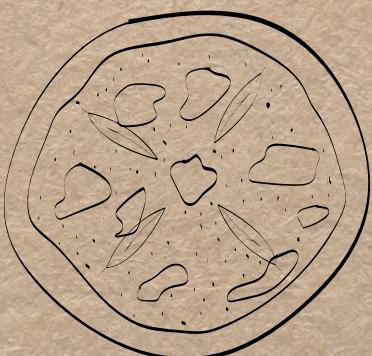


Special flour is needed to make the dough. The dough is comprised of only 5 simple ingredients, water, sea salt, fresh yeast and flour. The dough must proof for at least 2 days.

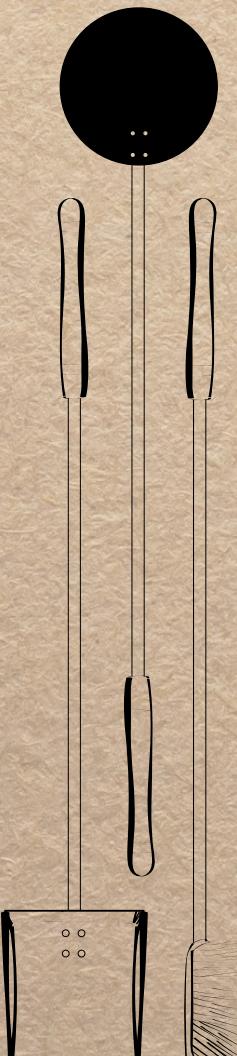


Stretching the dough looks easy, but is quite the task. As with anything, it has its ways of doing it. There are many techniques that can be applied, but according to the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana (VPN), the Neapolitan slap technique is the official way of stretching the dough.

Also, a marble table is required, this allows the dough to glide over the working surface. This allows the person to easily stretch the dough to size. Dough must be stretched thin, but not too thin as this will create holes and allows for air to be created within the oven. Once stretched, it is off to toppings and sauce.



The Wood Fire Oven

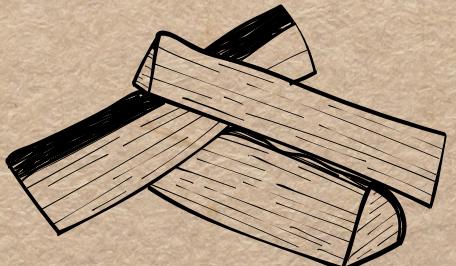
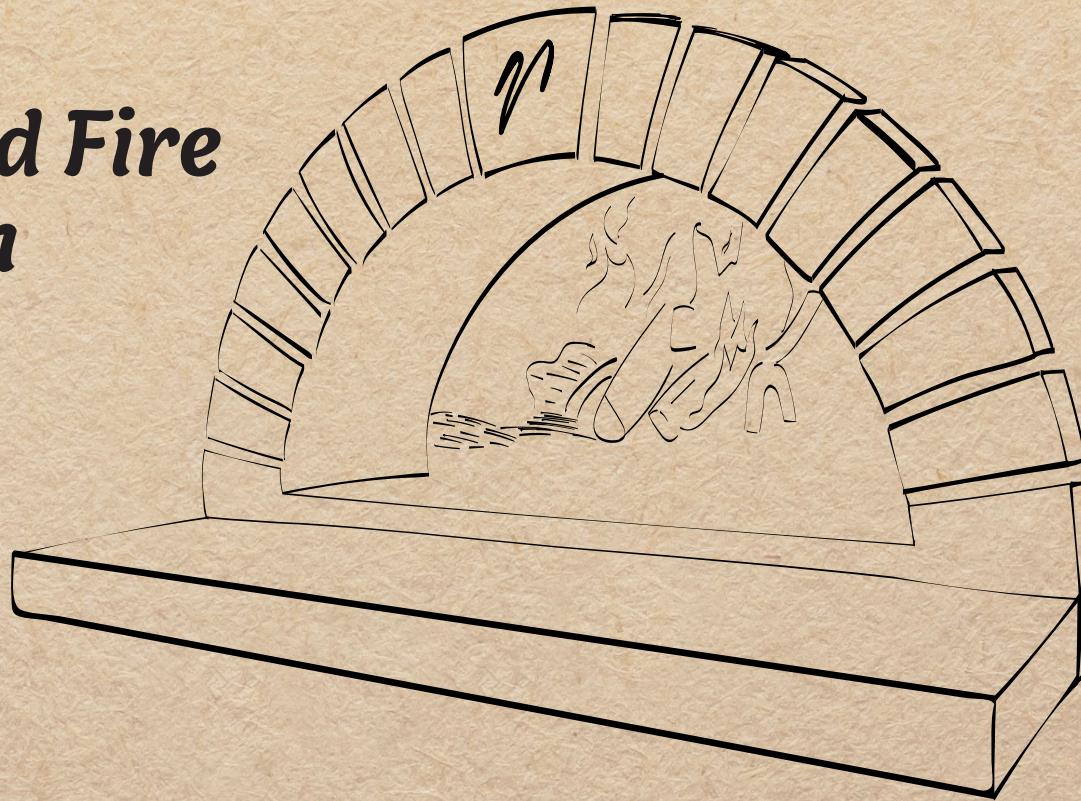


The Oven Brush, The Log Peel The Ash Shovel

The oven brush is used to brush the floor of the oven. The oven floor must be cleaned off by any residue left by moving the wood, ashes, or any flour that gets burned from the bottoms of pizzas.

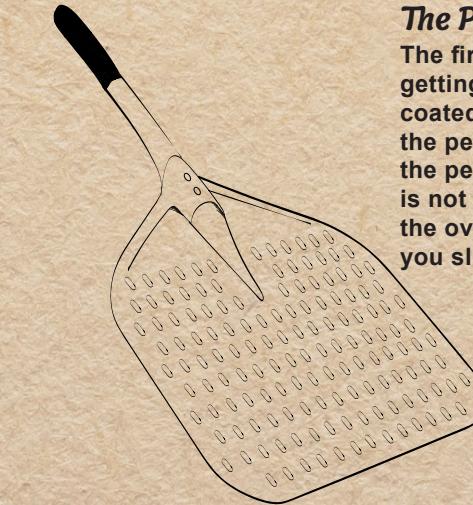
The log peel is used to move the seasoned wood onto the fire.

The Ash shovel is used to removed excess ash from the oven.



Hardwood Log

Hardwood type is used to heat up the oven. Red oak is nice. One of the most important things about using wood to cook is that the log should be seasoned (Drying) before adding to the fire. This is done by placing the log on the right side (opposite of fire) of the oven. Once dried, it will catch on fire and should immediately be added to fire.



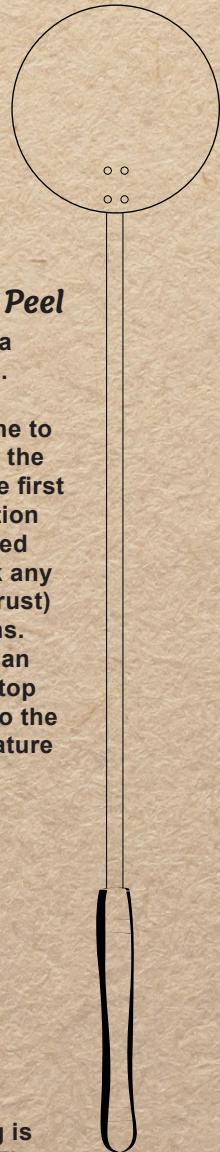
The Perforated Peel

The first step to cooking the pizza is getting it on the peel. The peel is slithly coated with flour and with a swift motion, the peel is slid under the pizza. Once on the peel, you double check that the pizza is not sticking. You insert that pizza into the oven, then with another swift motion, you slide the pizza onto the oven floor.



Ah! Pizza!

The pizza is done, with visual cues, the browning is perfect around the crust with beuatiful blisters. The underside should not be burnt but slightly blistered as well. All that is needed now is to cut the pizza into slices to enjoy!

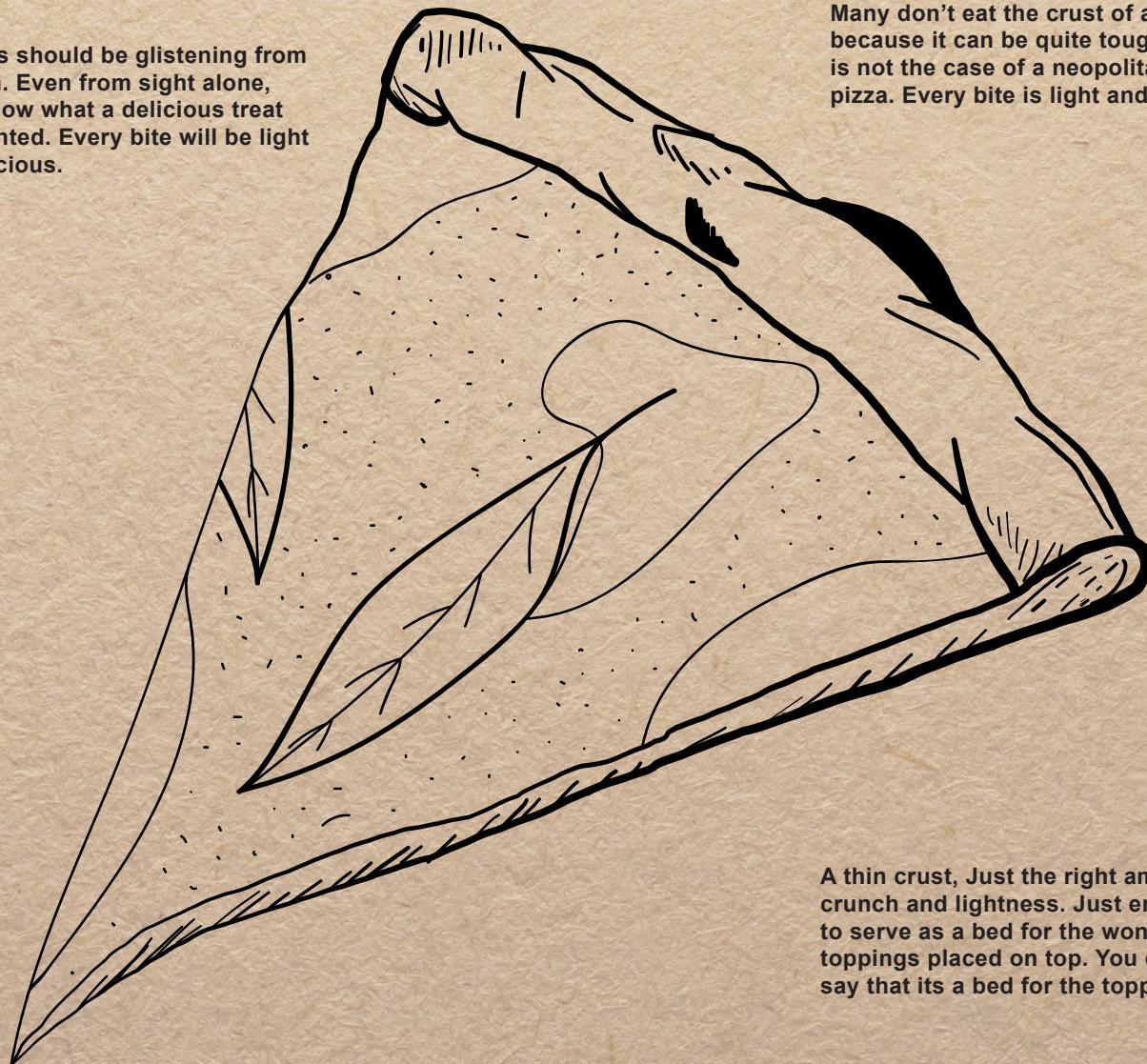


Pizzaiolo!

Fruits of your Labor

Toppings should be glistening from the oven. Even from sight alone, you'll know what a delicious treat is presented. Every bite will be light and delicious.

The outer edge of the crust should be nice and golden, with some blisters. Many don't eat the crust of a pizza because it can be quite tough, but that is not the case of a neopolitan style pizza. Every bite is light and delicious.



A thin crust, Just the right amount of crunch and lightness. Just enough to serve as a bed for the wonderful toppings placed on top. You could say that its a bed for the toppings

The overall shape of a slice of pizza, but this one should be sturdy enough to hold its shape yet with just bit of "floppiness" towards the point. Every bite is filled with a light delicious bite.