

ED SIMMONS

DOUGH ARTISAN PIZZERIA / CALDWELL, NEW JERSEY

ED DISCUSSES ARTISAN PIZZA

Since opening Dough Artisan Pizzeria in 2013, Chef/owner Ed Simmons has made sure the artisan culture pervades his business. He cultivates a seasonal menu with hand-crafted pizzas, small plates, main dishes, and salads.



THE CONCEPT FOR DOUGH IS AN AMERICAN WOOD-FIRED PIZZERIA,

utilizing locally sourced, American-made ingredients and humanely raised meats. We've created an ambiance that is warm, rustic, family friendly, and suitable for all ages.

In regards to our philosophy, we use the freshest ingredients, the best techniques and remain focused on the smallest details. We maintain a smaller seasonal menu, which guarantees the highest quality product. During the season, the bulk of our organic produce comes from Circle Brook Farm, less than 30 miles away.

We only believe in serving humanely raised animals. Our free-range chickens are sourced from Gladstone Valley Farms in Peapack, New Jersey, who utilizes non-GMO feed. Our Berkshire pork is pasture raised from Riverbend Farms. We

purchase, butcher and utilize the entire pig in-house.

ON ARTISAN — In the culinary sense, artisan means, to me, a highly trained, skilled cook, who takes pride in making product from scratch, in house, using the highest quality local ingredients.

ON THE DINING EXPERIENCE

When it comes to the front of house, our artisan focus is a culmination of each of the efforts we've put into the restaurant. I choose staff that are passionate about food and educate them on the techniques and ingredients in each dish. This in turn is communicated to the customers who also share our passion for hand-crafted cuisine.

Beyond the food, the design of our dining rooms was largely by 'artisans'. Our main dining room includes wood

from an 18th century chicken barn, which was demolished, reclaimed, cut and constructed entirely by hand. The sconces in the main dining room are handcrafted upcycled sewing machine spindles, and the sconces in the side dining room are hand-crafted from old oak wine barrels. Finally, the photographs throughout the restaurant are of Circle Brook Farms and there is an upcycled American flag wall hanging in the side dining room, also by local artists.

ON WORKING WITH LOCAL FARMS

— In my experience, negotiations with farmers is difficult. I work with farmers who have an interest in sharing a mutual partnership — partnership meaning we work together on seasonal plantings, CSA programs and events outside of the restaurant.

Tell us about your dough formula.

➔ Our dough formula was years in the making even prior to opening the restaurant. From purchased cultures, to now our homegrown wild culture which naturally leavens our dough. We are finally satisfied seven years later with our dough. However, the process is ongoing. It is a constant battle with time and temperature in the fermentation process, as well as refining the formula with higher-quality ingredients and techniques.