

New Jersey's 'Razza' Named Best Pizzeria in North America

Roberta Cutillo (June 27, 2019)



Leading online pizza guide 50 Top Pizza announced its ranking of the 100 best pizzerias in North America. First place went to Dan Richer's Razza Pizza Artigianale in Jersey City.

On June 27th, [50 Top Pizza](#) [2], an articulated online guide to the best pizzerias in the world, revealed the ranking of the Top 100 pizza joints in North America.

New York City was strongly represented on the list, however first place was assigned to Dan Richer's [Razza Pizza Artigianale](#) [3] in Jersey City. [Pizzeria Bianco](#) [4] in Phoenix, Arizona came in second and [Lucali](#) [5] in Brooklyn was third.



50 Top Pizza curators Paola Guerra and Albert Sapere, who presented the event held inside the [James Beard House](#) [6] in Greenwich Village, explained that the judges are asked to rate the pizzerias independently of style and instead focus on things such as the quality of the products, the ingredients that go into the pizza, and the atmosphere, the experience of the place itself.

And in fact, just by looking at the list, one can tell that it includes various types of pizza. Some, including [Joe's Pizza](#) [7] (21st) and [Paulie Gee's Slice Shop](#) [8] (18th) are known for their crispier New York style slices, while others such as [Ribalta](#) [9] (31st) and [Kesté](#) [10] (27th) serve a more traditional Neapolitan pizza, though each give it their own special touch.

As this year's top pizzaiolo, Dan Richer, mentioned in his brief speech, "pizza-making is all about the details. It's an extremely precise and complicated process that seldom gets the recognition it deserves."

He went on to express his gratitude for receiving such a title, adding that this doesn't mean he won't keep changing and getting better. "It's a continuously evolving process," he said, "I'm constantly tampering with the ingredients, techniques, ways to manage the temperature."

Though he isn't Italian, Richer grew up - as many Americans do - eating and loving pizza. After college, he traveled to Italy for the first time and, having tasted the pizza there, he discovered it was completely different from what he was used to back home. This realization made him want to delve deeper into just how pizza is made.

Back in the States, he began to explore this topic, mostly by trial and error. "I didn't learn from anyone, I kept trying out different things, making adjustments, and persisted," he explains. "It took years before I started to get it right."

He stated a catering company, worked in professional kitchens, and previously purchased another pizzeria, gaining recognition - he was even a James Beard Foundation Rising Star Chef semi-finalist in 2011, something highly unusual for a pizza-maker.

In 2013, he opened Razza Pizza Artigianale. The pizza there doesn't fit into any particular category or follow a specific style. Richer defines it as "artisanal American pizza", the method is constantly evolving and combines various elements from different types of pizza.

A fundamental aspect though is the freshness of the products. All the ingredients are locally produced and seasonal, following the Italian approach to cooking. An approach which was shared by James Beard, the famed American culinary figure who lived in the House where the event was held.

In fact, as the Foundation's director pointed out, [James Beard](#) [11] was amongst the first in America to emphasize the importance of elements such as freshness, seasonality, and sustainability in



cooking. These aspects are all at the core of Italian cuisine and, of course, pizza, making this the perfect venue for the event.

On this occasion, 50 Top Pizza also named the finalists for the top 50 pizzerias in Brazil and the top 50 in South America (explaining that Brazil has its own category because it is home to an insanely vast quantity and variety of pizzerias - Sao Paulo has the most pizzerias in the world.)

The project is continuously expanding to cover an increasingly large portion of the globe, because, though pizza was born in Italy, it is now a global product that can be found all over the world, in all its sometimes wonderful, sometimes bizarre, and mainly interesting variations.

You can find the complete ranking here: <https://www.50toppizza.it/en/50-top-northern-america-2019/>
[12]

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Links

- [1] <http://newsite.iltaly.org/files/pizzadirazzapizzaartigianalejpg>
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- [3] <https://razzanj.com/>
- [4] <http://www.pizzeriabianco.com/>
- [5] <https://www.lucalibrooklyn.com/>
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- [9] <http://www.ribaltapizzarestaurant.com/nyc>
- [10] <http://kestepizzeria.com/en/home/>
- [11] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Beard
- [12] <https://www.50toppizza.it/en/50-top-northern-america-2019/>