



TRIBUNE-STAR READERS WEIGH IN ON WHO HAS  
THE BEST PIZZA IN THE WABASH VALLEY

# The Upper Crust

The definition of the perfect pizza is very much open to debate.

Extra cheesy, juicy toppings, thin crust, thick crust – any number of preferences can sway personal opinion on what makes the ideal pie, according to Tribune-Star

readers who participated in the newspaper's Best of the Wabash Valley Pizza survey.

And with that much variation, it became impossible to single out only one clear-cut winner. Instead, we've opted to recognize the Wabash Valley's top four choices.

## MAURIZIO'S PIZZA

Maurizio's Pizza has proven to have staying power in the Wabash Valley.

Winner of the Best of the Wabash Valley Pizza survey 11 years ago, Maurizio's, at 2940 Wabash Ave. and 5035 N. Lafayette St., is once again one of the most-liked.

What's the business's recipe for success?

"We do homemade sauce and homemade dough so I think that it gives it a lot of extra flavor," said Jim Eslinger, one of Maurizio's owners. "It's not just some type of cookie-cutter pizza place. It's almost more of a gourmet pizza. It cost a little bit more, but it's worth it."

Of course, Maurizio's jumbo "747" pizza helps it bring in the crowds as well. "We sell quite a few of those every night," Eslinger said.

### YOU SAID IT

*"The gigantic 747 will serve a crowd! We love the sauce and the crust – delicious."*

– Marcia Myers, Terre Haute

*"The ingredients are always fresh. In the summer the owners use fresh tomatoes and green peppers from their own garden."*

– Jim Myers, Terre Haute

## PIZZA HUT

Having been around since 1958, Pizza Hut can boast of experience. And that experience has led to success for the restaurant chain.

According to the company's Web site, Pizza Hut has been named Best Pizza Chain in America for 10 of the past 12 years in Restaurant & Institutions Magazine's "Choice of Chains" national consumer survey.

What's its secret? "Relentless innovation, commitment to quality and dedication to customer service and value," according to its Web site.

Tribune-Star readers concur. With labels such as fresh, variety, prompt and tasty leading the way, Pizza Hut is a Wabash Valley favorite.

### YOU SAID IT

*"The toppings are always fresh and the hand tossed is always cooked just right. I LOVE PIZZA HUT!"*

– Darrell Blevins, Terre Haute

*"They never mess up my order and the variety never leaves you sick of their pizza."*

– Thomas L. Snediker, Terre Haute



## BEST OF THE REST – HONORABLE MENTION

■ Wanda Bown's homemade pizza (New Goshen)

■ Mr. Gatti's (Clinton)

■ Pizza Villa (Jasonville)

■ Chicago Pizza

■ Pizza Depot (Shelburn)

■ Monical's (Robinson)

■ Joe's Pizza (Paris)



## PIZZA GALLERY

One of the Valley's new kids on the block in the pizza business is finding that it can hold its own. Pizza Gallery at 104 W. Eighth St. in Clay City has only been open since July but has generated quite a buzz in its short existence.

The venture's relative newness may be a little misleading though. Co-owner Danielle Flora said that the "very small" operation's employees bring great experience to the kitchen.

"The people that I have working here have all worked in other places," said Flora, who owns Pizza Gallery with her husband David. "So we're all very experienced. We know what to do and we know to use the best ingredients."

Flora added that the business's breadsticks also are a major draw.

### YOU SAID IT

*"They are generous with toppings, reasonably priced and always have my pizza ready in less than 15 minutes."*

– Garry Canner, Terre Haute

*"Full menu, hand-thrown dough and locally owned – not a chain store – they care!"*

– Delbert Willmouth, Brazil

## PAPA JOHN'S

Papa John's says it has a simple formula for success: Focus on one thing and try to do it better than anyone else.

That message hits home with Terre Haute South Vigo High School students in Carole Nasser's class. Nasser collected several newspapers after they had been used through the Newspapers In Education program and had students fill out the Best of the Wabash Valley Pizza survey.

"I was amazed at the love of Papa John's! Geez, I sound like a commercial," Nasser wrote. "Perhaps we should contact their headquarters and suggest a commercial for them???"

Nasser's class's contribution puts Papa John's among the leaders.

### YOU SAID IT

*"The toppings are great, good sauce and the crust is delicious and they have good deals."*

– Brittany Johnson, Terre Haute

*"The crust is awesome. I can eat two large pizzas in one sitting. It's so good."*

– Chad Everett, Terre Haute