

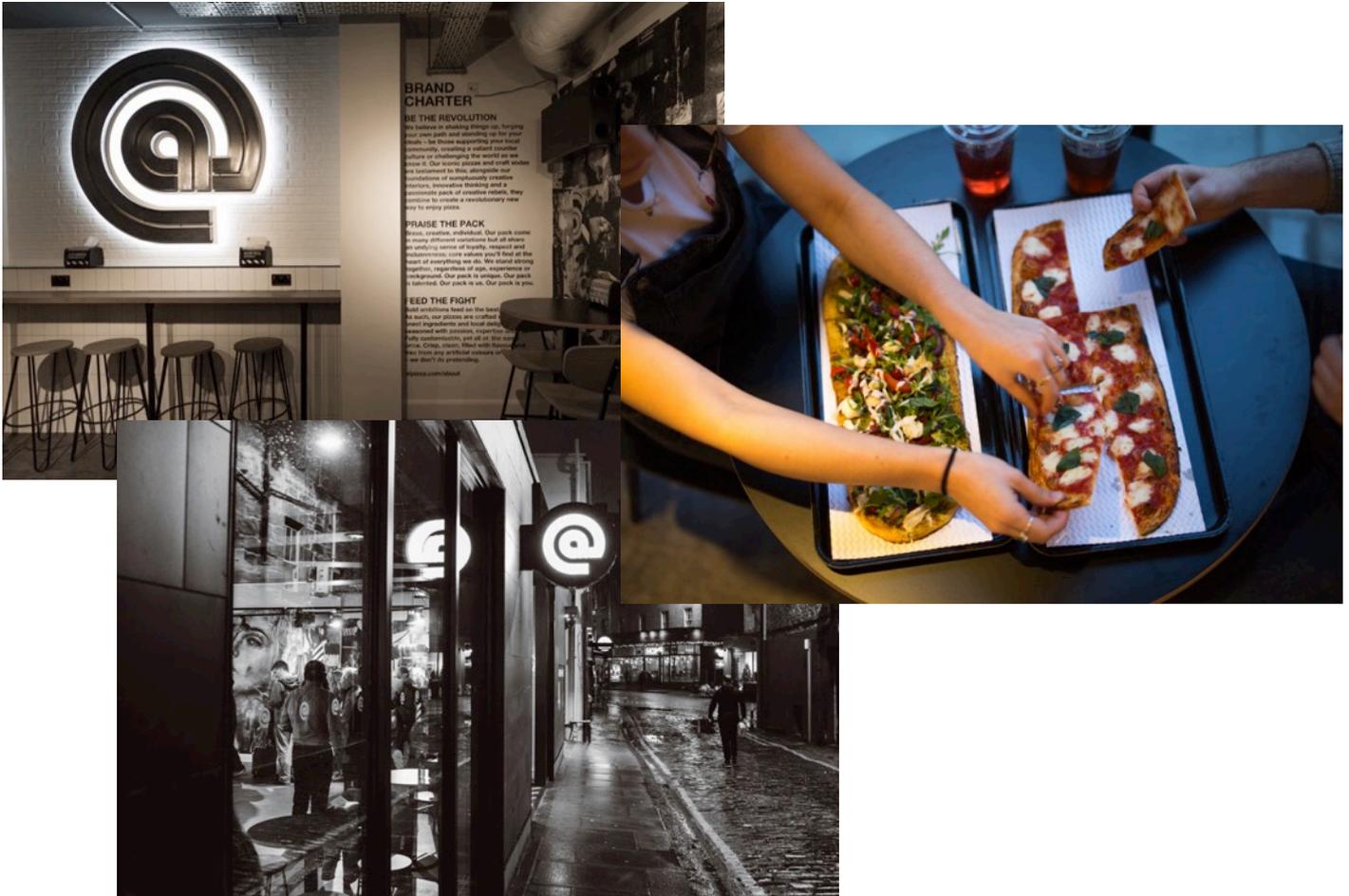
PRESS RELEASE

Edinburgh

Wednesday 10 January 2018

THERE'S A PIZZA REVOLUTION HAPPENING IN EDINBURGH'S WEST END

@pizza creates pioneering counter-serve experience on Charlotte Lane



Down a quiet lane in the West End of Edinburgh a pizza revolution is taking place. After months of research and development, the founders of @pizza have produced a pioneering counter-serve pizza restaurant with quality ingredients at its core.

@pizza is the coming together of a set of bold ideas to challenge the fast-casual market by introducing an exciting new counter-serve casual dining experience to the Edinburgh food scene.

Founders Bhasker Dhir and Rupert Lyle spent months crafting recipes for @pizza's two dough bases. Both slow-proved for 48 hours on the premises, one is a sourdough and the other, made with 100% spelt flour referred to as ancient grain, has a lower gluten content and higher nutritional value.

Rupert commented: *"The concept has been designed to be simple, replicable and future proof, so we have designed all of the systems and processes behind the business to enable consistently excellent products and service and expand this across a number of locations. Our vision is to change the way people eat pizza by changing the way it is served."*

Sourcing ingredients from Scotland and beyond, the pair have ensured every topping has a fully traceable provenance. Customers are offered Scottish mozzarella from East Lothian, a tomato sauce made in Parma from local tomatoes, a bespoke Italian sausage created so it curls beautifully when cooked, their own-recipe meatballs, Pesto Genovese (DOP) made using Genoese basil and extra-virgin olive oil, Salamello Salumi from Milan, and free-range hen's eggs from Scotland. A further 48 ingredients are offered.



Bhasker said: *"The essence of Italian cooking, in fact any cooking, is great ingredients and this has been the basis of our development. We set out to create the best pizza possible, not just once, but every time. I've been making pizza at home since I was 15 and have only really eaten pizza better on one to two occasions. Shortly after we opened I made pizza at home and my wife had to admit she preferred @pizza. Rather disappointing for me, but it proved we had got it right!"*



In keeping with @pizza's high-quality ideals every product served has to be the best it can be. Rather than opting for generic soda brands, @pizza has developed its own-recipe craft sodas. Made with Fair Trade unrefined cane sugar and stevia. Each of the six flavour combinations, including Sicilian lemonade made with lemons from Sicily, peach and honey iced tea, and grapefruit and juniper, are made with 100% natural ingredients with refreshingly authentic results. Stevia is a naturally sweet ingredient and has been used to keep the sugar levels down to approximately 100 calories per glass. Not as low as a diet drink, but preferable to artificial sweeteners.

The @pizza customer enjoys a fully customisable, made-to-order eating experience that starts at the counter where fresh oval bases are carefully layered with ingredients, before being cooked in a special conveyer belt oven. Once ready the customer is presented with a final selection of ingredients to finish their pizza. For the indecisive, a core range of pre-designed pizzas are available, including At Tiffany's - a breakfast pizza, Mean Greens - a salad pizza, and Vanilla Sky - a dessert pizza made with chocolate sauce, mixed berries, icing sugar and sweet ricotta.



Open 7 days a week, the @pizza experience is perfect as part of an evening out, meeting up with friends or as quick lunch. The strikingly modern interior featuring imagery by local artists, great playlists, USB chargers and a huge glass frontage is designed to make people want to linger, but @pizza appeals equally to those who prefer their food to go. It's anytime dining at its best.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

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Opening Hours

Sunday – Thursday, 12 noon – 10pm

Friday & Saturday, 12 noon - 11pm

About

Located in the West End of Edinburgh, @pizza opened the doors to its 92-cover counter-serve restaurant in November 2017. Offering customers a large choice of quality toppings, every pizza is fully-customisable, and is created using 48-hour

slow-proved sourdough or 100% spelt grain dough that is rolled and stretched on the counter for every order.

Over the coming months, @pizza plan to open in a further 4 locations in Edinburgh, ensuring everyone in the capital has access to great pizza, wherever they are.



The Founders

Bhasker Dhir and Rupert Lyle met through a mutual friend after both expressed a desire to start their own business, and as each come from a family with an abiding love of pizza, a pizza restaurant seemed a natural choice. Talking together they discovered a shared frustration at the lack of innovation and real value within the UK pizza industry and were intrigued by the growth of fast casual pizza brands. In a light-bulb moment they determined to start their own.



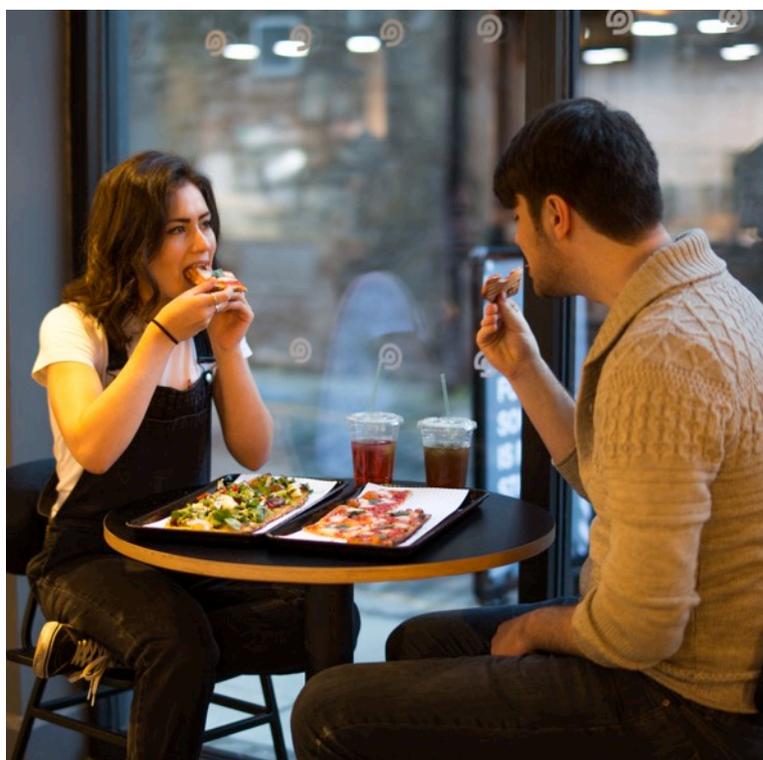
Bhasker has dedicated his working life to the food industry. He has developed brands, he has created new concepts in restaurants and in retail. He helped Pizza

Hut open their Scottish stores and expand their home delivery service. He has held senior positions at Burger King and Asda-WalMart, as well as co-founding the consultancy Moving Food. He has always been a perfectionist, instinctively knowing that the key to success lies in attention to detail.

Rupert has spent his entire career helping other people succeed. Over the course of 25 years in the venture capital industry he has gained unique insight into what makes a business work. His skill and knowledge have allowed hundreds of others to build their dream into reality, and with @pizza he is building his own.

The Product

@pizza is all about quality and choice. Great dough and great ingredients combine to present customers with an almost limitless choice of pizza. Customers select their own topping combinations or choose from a range of iconic pizzas, all priced at £9.50. The only topping that costs extra is King Prawns. Cooked at 600°F, a similar temperature to a wood-fired oven, the conveyor process ensures every product gets the perfect cook every time and is ready in just 90 seconds, so there's no waiting around. Sides include a house slaw and house greens.



To accompany the food, @pizza has developed their own-recipe craft sodas made with Fair Trade unrefined cane sugar and stevia. Stevia is a naturally sweet ingredient and has been used to keep the sugar levels down to approximately 100 calories per glass. Not as low as a diet drink, but preferable to artificial sweeteners. Each flavour combination contains real ingredients - absolutely no artificial flavours or colours. The six flavours are: Peach & Honey Iced Tea (still); Apple & Bramble; Sicilian Lemonade (lemons from Sicily); Mango & Blood Orange; Grapefruit & Juniper; Ginger, Mint & Lime.

Three local beers are served: Paolozzi Lager from the Edinburgh Beer Factory; Holyrood Pale Ale, from Stewart Brewing; and Ka Pai Pale Ale also from Stewart

Brewing. Minivino Italian wines come in single serving glasses of unoaked Chardonnay, Merlot and Rosé.

Sustainability

@pizza is committed to looking after the environment. All of the packaging used, including the drinks cups are made from vegetables and are fully-compostable as well as being sourced from Edinburgh-based company Vegware.

Living Wage

@pizza are amongst a few businesses in Scotland to be committed to paying their staff the Scottish Real Living Wage. They also say no to zero hour contracts, ensuring their employees receive a consistent living wage so they can more ably go about their lives. This enables @pizza to grow talent from within as well as benefitting from the other life skills their 'pack' bring with them. @pizza believe that great people give great service, in the same way they believe great ingredients are behind great food.

Ingredients - click [here](#) to view the full menu.



SOURDOUGH – @PIZZA SPECIAL RECIPE

The dough is cold-proved for 48 hours before it reaches the counter ready for use. The slow prove and tempering of the dough, together with cooking at 600°F delivers a light, crispy and bubbly base that's easy to digest.

ANCIENT GRAIN DOUGH – 100% SPELT

Spelt flour is lower in gluten and has better nutritional values than wheat flour, making it naturally healthy. The dough goes through the same slow-proving method as the sourdough.

SCOTTISH MOZZARELLA

Sourced from Yester Farms just outside Edinburgh. The cheese is made with Scottish Milk from Scottish cows.

SCOTTISH VEGAN CHEESE

Sourced from Bute Island Foods, this is a vegan cheese that tastes like cheese.

GRAN MORAVIA CHEESE

Made in the same way as Parmesan but vegetarian.

CLASSIC TOMATO SAUCE

Made in Parma, Italy with tomatoes farmed and packed locally.

ROQUITO® PEPPER SAUCE

@pizza's own blend using roquito® pepper sauce and @pizza's classic tomato sauce.

PESTO CON BASILICO GENOVESE (DOP)

Made in Italy with Genoese basil and extra-virgin olive oil.

SPICY BEEF MEATBALLS

Made to a special recipe for @pizza.

SPICY ITALIAN SAUSAGE

Basilicata Picante laced with fennel, made to a special recipe for @pizza so it curls beautifully when cooked.

PEPPERONI

@pizza call it pepperoni, but it's really Salamello Salumi from Milan, Italy.

KING PRAWNS

Large, deveined king prawns, that stay juicy when cooked at 600°F – the only topping @pizza to charge extra for (£2).

TINKERBELL TOMATOES

Also known as Tomberry tomatoes, officially the smallest tomatoes in the world and as sweet as grapes.

FRESH JALAPEÑO

Fresh, crisp and hot, how they should be.

PICKLED GREEN PEPPER

Pepperoni Lombardi - a speciality of the Lombardi region of Italy.

SCOTTISH FREE RANGE EGG

Laid in Scotland by hens living in Scotland.

SRIRACHA SAUCE

Real Sriracha – identifiable by the green top.

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