



REVIEW:

Pasquale Jones

By Chris Staag

It's no secret that we love Charlie Bird. That's why we were honestly a little terrified at the prospect of the same team opening Pasquale Jones near our office. What if it's not so good? What if they don't play rap music? Will they still have wine? These are the things that keep us up at night.

And there's more to it than that. In the interest of full disclosure, you should know that we've also gotten to know the Charlie Bird people a little bit, not because we are trying to hang out with restaurant folk, but because every time we are in there, they are just so f'cking nice. It makes the situation slightly more complicated. I imagine it's sort of like having your kid perform at her very first dance recital. You're optimistic that she'll nail her number, but you're also very aware that you can't be seen with her anymore if she screws it up.

Or maybe it's not complicated at all. Because Pasquale Jones is Charlie Bird with pizza.



I don't mean to diminish the things that are unique about this new spot - it is different. Sort of. It's a bit smaller than Charlie Bird, with bar seating along an open kitchen and two wood burning ovens that much of the best things on this menu come from. But all of the good things about Charlie Bird have been packaged up and brought over to Pasquale Jones, and that's what makes it an exceptional restaurant. The service is still excellent. The vibe is slightly upscale but relaxed. The wine list is varied and ranges in price from reasonable to highly unreasonable, and it's one of the best you'll find in this city. And while we haven't heard much hip hop over the span of our many recent visits, the music is still good too.

These are the things that this Charlie Bird/Pasquale Jones crew has figured out that so many other restaurateurs still haven't. Yes, the pizza is fantastic, but there is a lot of great pizza in this town. It's getting all of the other details right that makes a restaurant special. That, and not staffing the place with assholes.

Before you visit, know that following the Food Rundown below will lead you to the highest ratio of success. We actually like the food at Pasquale Jones a bit more than we do at Charlie Bird because pizza, but most anything from the wood burning oven will be good. And make sure to drink a bottle of wine. They have some.

FOOD RUNDOWN

Charred Cauliflower

The only way to make cauliflower taste good is apparently to cook the sh*t out of it over fire. It works here, just like it does every time. This is a good starter.



Little Neck Clam Pizza

By far our favorite thing to eat at Pasquale Jones. If you aren't already fond of clam pizza, this would be the time to try it. Squeeze the lemon, grab a slice, and eat it with one of the fermented peppers that will be delivered to your table. Served in the fact that you are, in this moment, more successful than 98% of people in the world not eating a clam pizza.



Margherita Pizza

Simple and excellent. Put this on your table, too.



Spicy Coppa Pizza

This pie comes with a thin layer of cured meat and kale, because we all need balance in our lives. Order it with confidence.

Black Trumpet Mushroom Pizza

For the vegetarians out there, and definitely not for people who don't like mushrooms. Who are you people, anyway? This pie is delicious.

Sunchoke Tortellini

An incredibly interesting and incredibly tasty tortellini with some brussels sprouts on the plate because why not? If it's on the menu, you want it.



Rigatoni

Good, if not incredibly unique or special. Maybe that's the point.



Dessert

Pasquale Jones does only one dessert every night, typically some kind of fruit cooked in the wood burning oven and served with ice cream. That's why I'd like to take this opportunity to say that all I ever want to eat is hot pineapple. Forever.