



diary of a MAD HUNGRY WOMAN

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family values at Buono Pizzeria — Long Beach

🕒 OCTOBER 10, 2016 👤 MAD HUNGRY WOMAN 💬 LEAVE A COMMENT

It isn't every day that an owner of the restaurant will take the time to sit and chat with you, but on a recent visit to Buono Pizzeria in Long Beach, I was lucky to chance upon Terri Buono, who was more than eager to share stories about her family — namely her father Nicolaniello Buono, who arrived in America in 1967 from Naples, and started his first restaurant in San Pedro decades ago.





Sadly, Nicolaniello passed away last year, but the family now owns three restaurants – the original San Pedro location and two in Long Beach – all of them, still run by the Buono family including Antonia, Nicolaniello’s wife, and their four children Frank, George, Oreste and Teresa (Terri).

Before you order, a complimentary amuse bouche of **bruschetta** arrives. Its simplicity speaks volumes, topped with fresh tomatoes and basil (offered at dinner time only) on crispy slices of baguette and sprinkled with a little parmesan cheese.



My son is a carbaholic so the first thing out he picks out is **Bread Sticks** (\$4.89) a very generous portion of chewy bread served with a stupendous marinara sauce, made fresh in-house and available in a small or large size portion to take home. I’m pacing myself but take a few bites so I don’t fill up too quickly.





Our server suggests **Mozzarella Sticks** (\$7.95) something I don't ordinarily order. I'm surprised by how crunchy and grease-less they are! It is also served with that the amazing marinara sauce, which you'll definitely want extra of.



I'm a little hesitant when our server recommends **Eggplant Rolls** (\$11.49) but I am wary. My experience with fried eggplant is that it is always too heavily breaded, and oily. He assures me that these are different, and I am stoked that I listened. The eggplant slices are ever so lightly breaded, and stuffed with goat cheese. The

breeding is a whisper on the eggplant, allowing the star to shine. I'm more than impressed by how light the fried items are, how home-made everything tastes.



If you're having a hard time deciding between pasta and pizza, just order both. The pizzas are offered in various sizes including a small personal size. This way, you can indulge in everything that catches your eye.

Buono's Special (\$13.99 personal) ranges between \$21.15 to \$25.75 and is similar to the combination pizza with toppings including pepperoni, sausage, ham, salami, mushrooms, olives, green peppers and sweet onion. The crust is a tad thicker than what I prefer, but because of its chew factor, I dip it into the marinara sauce and eat it all.





If you're vegetarian, **The Buona Lisa** (\$13.99 personal/ \$21.65 to \$26.75) is a sauceless pizza with mozzarella, provolone and goat cheeses, as well as tomatoes tossed with fresh garlic, basil, roasted peppers, pan roasted garlic and pine nuts.



If you're wanting pasta, the **Lasagna** (\$11.39) is home-made from Grandma Giulia's recipe using a combination of ricotta, mozzarella, ground beef and vegetables layered between wide noodles. I really enjoyed how light it is, unlike a lot of lasagnas which can lean towards the heavier side.





Leave some room for dessert because you'll not want to miss **Nutella Calzone** (\$5.99) a decadent marshmallow fluff and Nutella-stuffed package baked until brown. The fluff and Nutella is an ooey, gooey mess, but appeals to both adults and children alike.



There is validated parking (for 2 hours) in the parking lot to your right as you drive into the alleyway. Remember to bring your ticket and ask for validation when you leave.

Buono Pizzeria

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