



by Debbie Jo Evans

Mangia Pizza is as well known for its bright green Mangiazilla as it is for the unique (to Austin) stuffed pizza. I'm not sure what Mangiazilla's connection is to stuffed pizza, but the giant Godzilla-type creature is definitely a hit with the kids. For the 4-year-old and 10-year-old boys in our group, hearing Mangiazilla roar was an eagerly anticipated highlight of our visit to Mangia Pizza on Anderson Lane. The big, "pizza-powered" monster takes up an entire corner of the restaurant, nearly touching the ceiling. The kids couldn't wait to go over and see it close up, although as much as they wanted to, they were not allowed to climb on it. Next to Mangiazilla, there's a large window looking into the kitchen. My husband held our 8-month-old to the window, and she waved and waved to the guy tossing pizza crust, but he didn't respond.

We visited the restaurant around 7:30 p.m. on Monday, and it was pretty busy; however, we managed to find a table for our party of four adults, two children and a baby. By 8 p.m., the restaurant was half-empty. Most diners seemed to prefer an earlier dinner; others were picking up orders to go. Mangia uses the wooden booster-seat high chair which I don't like; however, the seats are now found

Family Dining Review

MANGIA CHICAGO STUFFED PIZZA

Restaurant, Take Out, Delivery • NORTH - 2900 W. Anderson Lane • (512) 454-5544
Monday-Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. • Friday-Saturday 11:00 a.m.-10:30 p.m. • Sunday 4:00-10:00 p.m.

Take Out or Delivery Only • U.T. CENTRAL - 3500 Guadalupe • (512) 302-5200 • CENTRAL - 2401 Lake Austin Blvd. • (512) 478-6600

Credit Cards: Visa, MasterCard, American Express accepted. • Personal, in-state checks accepted.

Overall Opinion: Good • Not your average pizza!

in practically every Austin restaurant, so we're learning to adjust.

We started with Cheese Sticks (\$2.95) which were good, if ordinary. The surprise was the homemade tangy salsa dip (rather than marinara). We also had a ranch-style sauce for dipping. Other appetizers include Basil Cheese Torta (\$4.95), layers of sweet basil pesto, pine nuts and provolone, served with fresh bread.

Mangia's specialty is the Chicago-stuffed pizza, served on your choice of whole wheat or white dough with a variety of traditional toppings, plus Spiced Chicken, Gardiniera and Pepperocini Peppers, Artichoke and Sun Dried Tomatoes. Mangia serves several specialty pizzas, including Spinach Pizza Pie, BBQ Chicken Pizza and Pesto Pizza. In a perfect blend of Chicago and Texas, Mangia also offers four Picante Pizzas, including one with chorizo and homemade salsa.

We went with the Stuffed Pizza (they also serve thin crust), topped with rather traditional toppings, like pepperoni and ground sirloin. Although the menu says a 12" medium pizza serves three to four, we didn't believe them, so we ordered two mediums. Well, next time we'll believe

them. The pizza may be 12" in diameter, but it's also about two inches deep! We ended up taking home half of each pizza.

The stuffed pizza is definitely unique. Served in a deep dish pan, there is the usual layer of crust, topped by layers of toppings and cheese. The more toppings, the more layers, and the deeper the pie. Finally, the pizza is topped with another layer of crust. Tomato sauce is spread on the top crust only. It's fork-eating pizza.

A medium pizza ranges from \$11.75 for cheese only to \$18.50 for five ingredients. Our three-topping pizzas were \$15.80 each. (A three-topping thin crust pizza costs \$10.85)

The stuffed pizza takes 30 minutes to cook; however, you can call in your order and have it waiting for you when you arrive. I recommend calling ahead since there's not much to entertain kids for that long once Mangiazilla has roared.

On your first visit, pick up one of its take home menus. Mangia also delivers to limited areas and offers take-out service at three locations.

My husband, who hates pizza, was pleased to find a variety of other food to choose from. He had the Spinach and Beef Lasagna (\$7.50) which was served with a generous house salad and garlic bread. He loved it! Other versions of lasagna include Chicken Alfredo, Beef & Cheese and Spinach & Cheese. We also had the Philly

Cheesesteak (\$4.25), which was a little light on the toppings, but good.

Although we didn't try them, Mangia also serves some salads which are meals in themselves. The Caesar Salad (\$4.85 or \$5.85 with grilled chicken) is big enough for two and includes Mangia's own garlicky version of Caesar Salad dressing. The Italian Chef Salad (\$4.95) includes turkey breast, ham and cheese on a house salad with olives and pepperocini peppers.

We didn't have room for dessert; however Mangia serves Connoli (\$1.75) and Ooey Goey Brownie (\$2.25), as well as cookies and ice cream.

Mangia has a daily lunch special of an individual (6") pizza and salad for \$4.90. Spinach Pizza is served daily; one other pizza is offered each Monday through Friday.

Our waitress was friendly, although service was generally slow. One warning: a 15% tip was added to our bill. We didn't notice, so we accidentally double-tipped our waitress.

Overall, our visit was great. The meal was pretty expensive compared to what we usually spend on a "pizza dinner," however, considering we ordered twice as much pizza as we really needed, we'll be able to come out cheaper next time. The restaurant has a colorful, festive atmosphere and the food is a nice alternative to "pizza again?!"

MANGIA
CHICAGO STUFFED PIZZA

Mangia to eat



FREE Free Kids Entree