

## The Charlotte Observer

### Out for Lunch

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# Don't let name keep you away from Buck's Pizza

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*Despite unlikely moniker, you'll find  
impressive pies and superb Stromboli*

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What's in a name?

A friend bought pizza for our group. She went to a place called Buck's. "Hmmm ..." was my immediate, and uneasy, thought. Shouldn't a pizza place have a snazzy Italian name, be called something catchy like "House of Pie"?

But I'm adventurous, and I gave Buck's Pizza a try. Good thing I did. This takeout/delivery place turns out a good hand-tossed pizza and one of the best strombolis I've ever eaten.

In this country's large pizza market, Buck's constitutes a small piece of the pie. North Carolina is home to several. I visited one of the stores.

To minimize your wait, phone in your order. Otherwise plan on warming one of the chairs in the front for 15 to 20 minutes.

Buck's offers 6-, 9-, 12-, 14-, and 16-inch pizzas plus a "Belly Buster," a 1-by-2 foot pie. There are 16 specialty pizzas, or choose from 24 toppings to make your own creation.

A pepperoni pizza was loaded with the oily meat. Buck's didn't skimp on the cheese, either. The sauce had a fresh tomato

taste. The crust was the same thickness from front to back.

The veggie pizza had mushrooms, onions, tomatoes, green peppers and black and wonderfully salty green olives.

You smelled the garlic more than tasted it on the Old World pizza, which also featured cheese, bacon and tomatoes.

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## Buck's goes extra mile with food, presentation

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The rest of the menu is mostly strombolis, hoagies, wings, chicken tenders and salads.

Look for thick cubes of bacon with pepperoni, sausage, ham, ground beef and mozzarella cheese in the stromboli. The entrée resembles a stuffed slice of pizza instead of the typical rolled Stromboli. The crust is almost buttery, and its artfully woven back edge demonstrates Buck's commitment to take its food a step further. Steak, Veggie, and Italian are some of the other varieties.

There's also an Italian hoagie (ham, salami, onion, cheese, green pepper, lettuce, tomato and Italian dressing), which was OK. Baked Ham, Steak and Turkey Club are among the other hoagies.

From among the side items, the Parmesan-covered bread sticks were nice.

I'll be honest, because of the name, I had doubted it. How could a place named Buck's produce one of life's zestier creations?

As it would seem, very well.