



Pontormo Caffè

In the summer, the pilgrims travelling from San Miniato stop at Bar Pontormo, the first you find in town if you come from the north. You often see them through the window: maybe they're exchanging information from traveller to traveller, maybe they can't wait to rest, maybe they're drawn by the smell of Gerardo's pizza. For a few years they've been keeping the locals company, meeting the regular clients who pass by for a coffee, breakfast or a snack, when the children go crazy for the famous donzelle, one of the most delicious kinds of Tuscan street food (a simple yeast-raised dough, similar to bread, cut into strips and fried in boiling oil, eaten warm).

Gerardo and Rosita are an institution in Gambassi, but to tell you the truth, they came here by chance - because of the tsunami of globalisation, they'll explain, half serious and half joking. They passed half their lives working in the textile industry in Prato, and in 2006 changed everything and opened Bar Pontormo. On July 1st of that year, Gerardo learned the art of making pizza from Giuseppe Il Calabrese, a veteran pizza maker. He still follows his recipe, but after years of fighting with the dough, Gerardo doesn't know if he is the one that obeys it or vice-versa. His pizza is definitely slow: slow to rise, prepare and cook, because as Confucius says, it's hard to make bad pizza, but it's even harder to make it good! (Well, we're not sure if Confucius ever ate pizza, but we like to think that, if he had, he would have considered it equal to all those other manifestations of the sacred he recognised in everyday life).

So, he uses organic durum wheat flour, lets the dough rise for at least 24 hours, and uses fresh products. It's not quantum physics, but anyone who has tried to make pizza knows how delicate a balance you need to make a light, crisp dough. Gerardo knows what he's doing, which is clear as soon as he cuts the first piece.



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To confirm his theory, he quotes Colette Tatou from Ratatouille: How can you recognise good pizza without tasting it? Not by smelling it, not by looking at it, but by listening to the sound of its crust.

Stop in for a pizza at Bar Pontormo, but don't be in a rush: the tempo of Gerardo's pizza is slow, and it's worth it.