

Into this densely populated Italian-American pocket comes Massimo Ottani from Latina, along the Tyrrhenian Sea, south of Rome, halfway to Naples. In February, Ottani opened The Landing – L’Approdo Pizza & Kitchen (L’Approdo translates as “The Landing”) a block away from a DePasquale’s on Adams Street. The little pizzeria has just a couple of stools inside and tables on an outdoor patio. It’s mainly take-out. What a place!

In your pizza box are thin-crust pies made with Ottani’s own dough, sandwiches on exceptional bread he bakes, specials of the day – giant, juicy meatballs in a heavenly sauce, chicken Parm, lasagna with Bolognese sauce, tripe, cheese, or meat arancini – and typical Italian desserts.

The pies are traditional Neopolitan. The thin crust is a substantial, chewy dough that’s full of flavor and is cooked through; it tastes like someone who cares mixed it. Toppings are enough to flavor the dough without getting sloppy. The Margherita, which I consider the litmus test of all pies, is remarkable: a little sauce, some mozzarella, Parmesan, olive oil, and basil. Half-moon-shaped calzone are also thin, not doughy, not messy. If you cut off a piece, you can eat it like a sandwich. The semplice calzone (also called cotto), with tomato sauce, mozzarella, and ham is very good.