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They deliver on taste

Pizza Post among best cheese pies in town

By Sonia Fernandez, Staff Reporter

The mission at hand was not easy. It was going to require an open mind and an appetite.

Fortunately, about 130 guests at the Anderson Estate were up for the challenge of taste testing 12 slices of cheese pizza from 12 different pizza places in Greenwich.

Carolyn and Jerry Anderson held their semi-annual food tasting event on Friday night. Laura Doris, who was making sure everyone received their name badge with a little pizza fact written on it, said the first event five years ago was a way for the Andersons to thank their real estate clients.

Friends, family, clients and employees all came together under the tent after enjoying fruit and white wine during the cocktail hour. The excitement grew. Mr. Anderson said some guests were heard saying they would be able to know right away if they tasted pizza from their favorite pizza place in town. Many were surprised by the results.

As everyone sat down at white linen-draped tables under a tent, Mr. Anderson stood at a podium and set the rules for the event.

"It was not easy to choose the 12 places, but we thought that 12 slices of pizza was enough for anyone," Mr. Anderson said.

Guests were then asked to taste each slice and give it a score from one to five, one being "very bad, I'd probably rather starve" and five being "I'd travel a long distance to get the pizza." The difference, he said, between a pizza tasting and a wine tasting is that it isn't necessary to chew the pizza and spit it out.

Once the ground rules were set, the speaker for the evening, Dwayne Ridgaway, author of *Pizza: 50 Traditional and Alternative Recipes*, put the event in context by providing some information about pizza and its history. How did Mr. Ridgaway become a pizza expert?

"I eat a lot of pizza, that's how I'm an expert," he said.

Mr. Ridgaway graduated from the College of Culinary Arts of Johnson and Wales University in Providence, R.I. He was interested in grilled pizza made on charcoal grills, but decided to gather recipes from different cultures and ethnic backgrounds for his book.

After Mr. Ridgaway's presentation, it was time for the challenge. Plates with 12 slices of pizza came out to each table, where two bowls of grapes were provided to cleanse the palate between bites. Each slice was labeled on the



Paulette Tholen and her daughter Christina Tholen discuss their favorite pizzas. — Sonia Fernandez photo

plate with the letters A through L. As guests tried each slice, only one stood out as most greasy; it was given low grades by many.

"I've never really concentrated so hard while eating," Ned Cloonan said.

The 12 types of pizza came from River Road, Domino's, Sound Beach Pizza, Planet Pizza, Express Pizza, Glenville Pizza, Arcuri's Pizza, That Little Italian, Pizza Factory, Pizza Hut, Bella Nonna, and Pizza Post.

Paulette Tholen, of Old Greenwich, said her favorite pizza was the one labeled with the letter L, which was Pizza Post.

When the results finally came in, most guests agreed with Ms. Tholen; Pizza Post was the winner with 408 points.

Sound Beach was a close second with 404 points, and Arcuri's came in third with 401.

Christina Tholen said the tasting would help her decide where to order from in the future.

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