WHERE TO GO NEXT

**new pizza artisans**

Chefs and bakers are transforming pizza from greasy pies in cardboard boxes to Slow Food-worthy creations with crackly, sharred crusts and ingredients directly from the farmers’ markets.

**co., new york city**

Jim Lahey is one of the country’s elite bread bakers, so when he decided to open a pizza place, it was huge news. The Sullivan Street Bakery founder had his eureka moment while doing a flatbread demo on a truck at a farmers’ market. More than three years later, he launched Co. (a.k.a. Company). Toppings are remarkable, like the fresh spinach on the three-cheese Popeye—a favorite of chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten’s, one of Co’s owners. But what people can’t stop talking about is the crust: Made with Lahey’s famous no-knead dough, it’s both chewy and crisp, and ever-so-slightly-tangy. “I love the restraint of pizza,” Lahey says. “It’s haute but still has street-foodness.” 230 Ninth Ave.; 212-243-1105. —Kate Krader

**Great Lake, Chicago**

It would be so easy to miss Great Lake. It doesn’t have a website. Its hours are erratic. It seats 14 at most. Peer into the window of the tiny storefront restaurant in Edgewater, and the place looks more like a shop, selling items like Amish popcorn. The spot is run by husband-and-wife Detroit natives Nick Lessins and Lydia Esparza; Lessins assembles pies to order and then masterfully chars them in his beloved gas oven, which is cranked up to 650°. Some toppings are baked onto the ethereally crisp crust; others—like the Mona cheese on the spinach pie—are added when the pizza is just out of the oven. 1477 W. Balmoral Ave.; 773-334-9270. —Tina Ujlaki

**exceptional pizza, plus pasta & more**