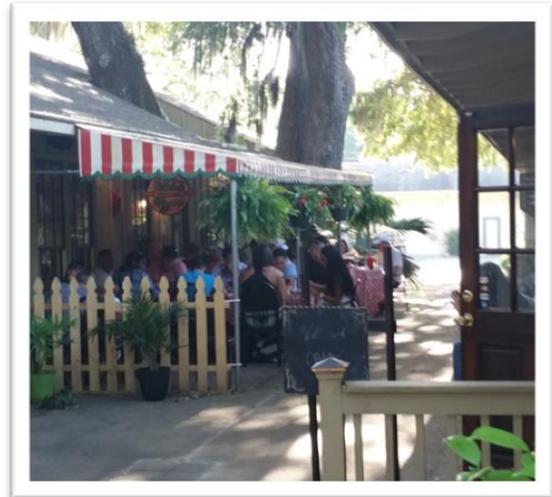


## Restaurant Review: Sal's Neighborhood Pizzeria

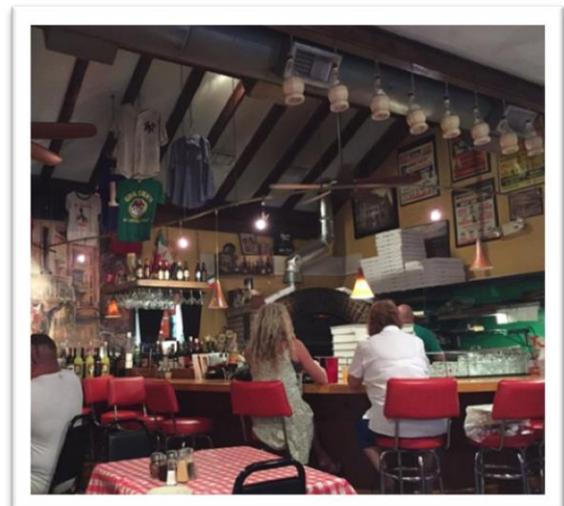
There are many great pizzerias in the Golden Isles, but if you find yourself on St. Simons Island, the best pizza can be found at Sal's Neighborhood Pizzeria. Sal's offers authentic New York style pizza as well as a wide range of other Italian dishes for lunch and dinner. The pizzeria is a labor of love for the New Jersey born Sal, who spent time perfecting family recipes for the restaurant. While Sal's Italian heritage lends itself to a healthy menu of Italian dishes, the pizza is the real star here.



Sal's has been open for a little over six years and has built a reputation for its friendly atmosphere. Located at 3415 Frederica Rd, Sal's is nestled down a small path and offers covered outdoor seating as well as tables and bar seating inside. Sal, a former professional boxer, is a fixture at the pizzeria and is always on hand to greet guests and inquire about the quality of their experience. There is a feeling here that everyone is family at Sal's. A great example of this happened on our visit: Sal rang a bell at the bar to gather the attention of the guests on one of his servers, who had just returned from maternity leave, asking everyone to welcome her back, which everyone did with a healthy round of applause.

The atmosphere at Sal's is a fun mix of the Italian theme and American sports. There is a fresco of an Italian city along the back wall. Photos and mementos from Sal's boxing days greet guests as they enter, and the rest of the walls are decorated with a mix of sports memorabilia and Italian themed pictures and photos. Sal and his staff often add to the atmosphere by singing along to "That's Amore" as it plays over the radio. The space itself, while not recommended for the claustrophobic, feels less crowded than cozy like an overly packed dining room at a family gathering. Sal is obviously trying to pack in as many of his St. Simons "family" as possible. While you may bump a neighbors' chair getting to your seat, it only adds to the family atmosphere as it gives you an opportunity to greet your neighbor.

The food is served right to your table, or you have the option of sitting at the bar where you can see the pizzas being pulled hot from the brick oven as you have a cold drink. The staff at Sal's is efficient but not intrusive as they make sure you are taken care of without disrupting your table's conversation, which, in large part, comes from how busy they are. After 5:30pm, there will most definitely be a wait to get a table so make plans accordingly. My friends and I arrived on Saturday at 5:00pm and had no problem getting seated, but the restaurant filled up quickly after that.



On to the food, my friends and I started with the fried ravioli, which arrived quickly. The ravioli was hot and crisp with just the right amount of fresh basil sprinkled over the top. The crust offered a nice crunch while the generous amount of mozzarella stuffed inside was melted and gooey. The dish came served with a side of marinara sauce for dipping or pouring over the ravioli and paired nicely with the zesty flavor of the fried pasta. Needless to say, these were gone in a hurry and had the whole group wanting to order another round.

Next, we ordered two pizzas to fit the range of tastes of the group. There were three of us, so we ordered two medium pizzas, which turned out to be just the right amount to leave the pans empty by the end of the meal. The first pizza we ordered was the napoletana (neapolitan), which came covered in fresh mozzarella cheese and slices of bright tomatoes. The flavor came primarily from the capers and leaves of basil generously spread across the top of the pizza giving the pizza a light, sweet taste with a nice salty bite. The brick oven crust added a nice crispiness to the proceedings and complimented the oiliness of the pizza perfectly. Our other pizza was covered in a healthy portion of sausage and pepperoni sliced to the perfect thickness to compliment the thin brick oven crust, both toppings exuding a spicy, peppery flavor.



In all, my friends and I left full, relaxed, and extremely satisfied with our experience without too much of a hit to our wallets. The specialty pizza was around \$17.00 for a medium and the two topping medium was \$13.00. We will definitely make a return visit in the near future, and perhaps try something from the extended Italian menu, though it's hard to pass up having another slice of the best pizza in the Golden Isles.

#### Further Info:

- Website: <http://www.salsneighborhoodpizzeria.com/index.html>
- Address: 3415 Frederica Rd, St Simons Island, GA 31522
- Price Range: Pizza - Medium \$10.99 Large \$12.99 Grande \$14.99 Entrees - \$7.95-\$12.95
- Hours: Sal's offers lunch and dinner Monday through Friday starting at 11:30am and 4:30pm respectively. Lunch starts on Saturday at 12:00pm and is closed on Sunday though private parties can be arranged.