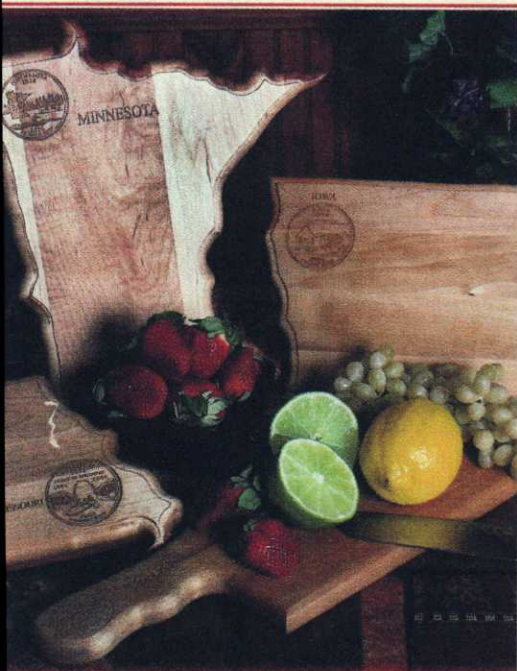
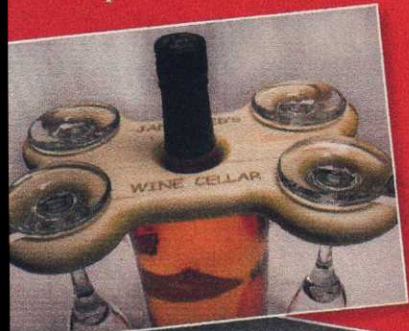




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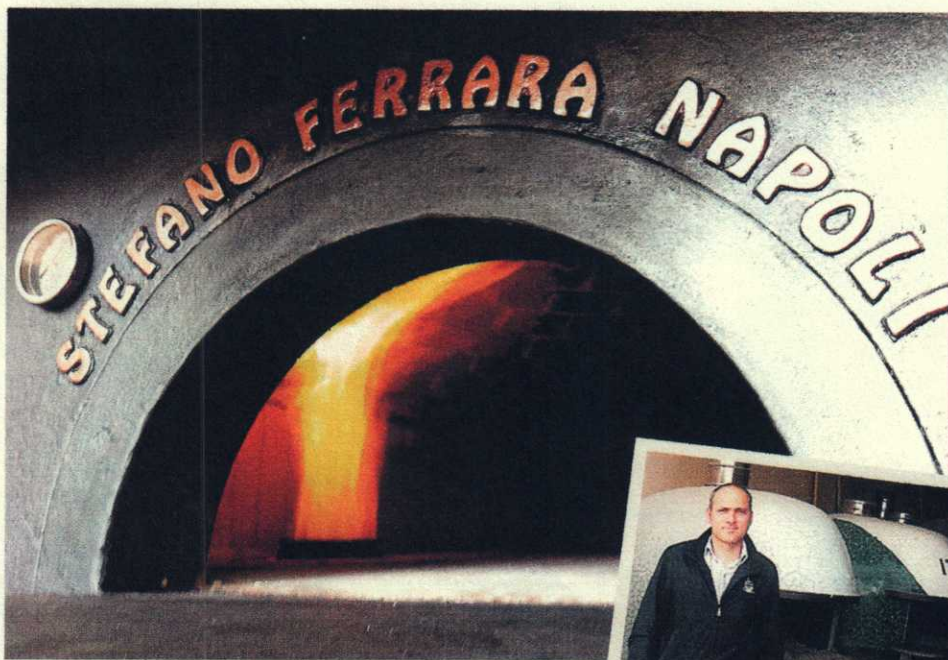
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THE GOODS ARTIGIANI



Stefano Ferrara with some of his signature beehive-domed ovens.

THE SOURCE

For purists of Neapolitan-style pizza, Stefano Ferrara builds distinctive stone ovens that cook the perfect pie.

When Pizzeria Locale, the Neapolitan-style pizza oasis and sister restaurant of Frasca in Boulder, Colo., was gearing up to sling pies earlier this year, their grand opening was delayed by a lengthy customs battle. That can happen when your kitchen's crowning item is a two-ton Stefano Ferrara oven imported from Naples.

He may not be a household name, but Ferrara inspires reverence among pizza devotees. "[His oven is] a dream to work with," says Jordan Wallace, Pizzeria Locale's head chef and pizzaiolo. "It's designed to cook pizza Napoletana."

Ferrara is a third-generation oven builder, and his distinctive, handmade ovens heat to more than 1,000 degrees and weigh up to 9,000 pounds. Wood-fired with a gas option, they optimize conduction and convection, surrounding the pizza with heat, melting the top while crisping its crust. Ferrara's ovens also keep an even, high temperature longer than industrial

models and cook pizzas in about 90 seconds. "It's just a phenomenal piece of equipment," says Dan Bavaro, a pizzaiolo and Ferrara's U.S. representative.

"You have to respect the correct proportions and use the right materials," Ferrara says of his design and production techniques, which are rooted in ancient Neapolitan construction and craft.

Bavaro estimates the U.S. has fewer than 30 Ferrara ovens, but Via Tribunali in Seattle, Paulie Gee's in Brooklyn, New York, and Una Pizza Napoletana in San Francisco all fire one up each day. Donatella Arpaia recently flew Ferrara to New York City to build her pizzeria's oven on-site—an undertaking that starts above \$16,000.

Ferrara's fixed ovens, which he makes in Naples and ships whole, run from \$9,000 to \$12,000. Made with tuff stones and Biscotto di Sorrento clay bricks, they're topped with Ferrara's signature decorative tilework. His name is inscribed on the oven's mouth, the final stamp of its coveted quality. —Corina Quinn