



**PIECE** proves you don't need to go deep for great pizza.

**CHICAGO PIZZA'S FLIP SIDE**

Chicago has a reputation for having awesome deep-dish pizza, but just as a Philadelphian may occasionally pass on a Philly cheese steak for a traditional meatball sandwich, sometimes I just feel like a thin-crust white-sauce pizza from **Piece**. This Bucktown spot—which also brews its own award-winning beer—allows you to customize your pizza. You pick the sauce—red, plain or white—then order whatever toppings you desire. My favorite combination is the White Style Pizza—a pie brushed with olive oil, diced garlic and mozzarella—topped with spinach, mushrooms and goat cheese. Don't expect Domino's Pizza prices, but *do* anticipate indulging in one of the best pizzas you'll ever have! The warm Spinach and Tomato Dip is a great starter—shredded spinach and diced tomatoes with a mozzarella alfredo sauce served with tortilla chips. Oh, and if you're feeling particularly adventurous, stay after dinner on a Saturday night for live-band karaoke! *Piece Brewery & Pizzeria*, 1927 West North Avenue, 773.772.4422, [www.piecechicago.com](http://www.piecechicago.com)

**RICCARDO'S TANTALIZING TRATTORIA**

There are several restaurants that I love but, for whatever reason, don't find myself returning to all that frequently. This isn't the case with Lincoln Park's **Riccardo**

**Trattoria**. After my first visit to this intimate and authentic northern Italian restaurant, I was back within a week! The food is comfortable, plain *delicious* and the prices are fair. Chef/owner Riccardo Michi personally makes every dish, with a little help from his sous-chef/wife; together they tend to every last detail and it shows. Portions are just the right size, especially for someone like me who lacks self-control when it comes to putting a halt to eating when I'm full. I was left satiated but not feeling like I was going to bust a pant button (don't laugh, it's happened before). The Foccacio appetizer—it may have been a special—was unbelievably rich and tasty. Imagine: a buttery brioche sitting beneath melted Fontina cheese and prosciutto. Mmmm. Among the divine house-made pastas are the Penne with Langostinos and Crab with a pink marinara sauce; the Lasagna, which was almost like a light and delicate pappardelle with cheese and meat sauce; and the Risotto with mush-

rooms and truffle oil. The Sabayon is the perfect light dessert to end the dinner, though if you're not full, maybe throw in a little Lemoncello. *Riccardo Trattoria*, 2119 North Clark Street, 773.549.0038



**RICCARDO TRATTORIA** is plain delicious.

**WAKAMONO** showcases classic and contemporary Japanese.



**MINIMALIST SUSHI**

**Wakamono** Japanese restaurant, Ping Pong's sister restaurant, is a good place to fulfill a sushi



craving. Located directly across the street from Ping Pong, Wakamono succeeds in living up to the standards that its older sister has set. They offer several so-called "contemporary" maki from which to choose. I enjoyed the Godzilla roll—shrimp tempura, avocado, cream cheese, spicy unagi sauce, tempura crumbs and scallions. Though the Oedipus roll was my favorite—fresh salmon, avocado, spicy sauce and cucumber, topped with salmon roe and wasabi mayo. Wakamono also features classic maki rolls such as spicy tuna and soft shell crab. And it must be added that the Yellowtail nigiri is so light it practically melts in your mouth! Other perks: They deliver and are open until midnight! *Wakamono*, 3317 North Broadway Street, 773.296.6800, [www.wakamonosushi.com](http://www.wakamonosushi.com)

**SULTRY SULTAN**

For downright delectable Middle Eastern food, which just so happens to be extremely affordable, try Wicker Park's **Sultan's Market**. Although I'm reluctant to order a sandwich for dinner—in fear that I won't be full enough—the Chicken Shawerma sandwich left me completely satisfied. The warm pita bread is smeared with Sultan's delightful hummus, then stuffed with deep marinated char-grilled chicken and topped with the Jerusalem salad.

And all for just \$4! Needless to say, I've quickly become a regular; my order rotates between this and the falafel sandwich. The falafel has a crisp outer shell—yes, unfortunately I believe this is thanks to the deep fryer—and a soft center, making it the best falafel in the city! They have great side dishes as well. The hummus is much creamier and smoother than the grocery store-bought version and the curry rice has simply amazing flavor. *Sultan's Market*, 2057 West North Avenue, 773.235.3072 ■

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