

A Slice of Heaven — the Stockholm Pie Company

By Pamela Eyden

The first time I visited the Stockholm Pie Company — one summer day — a line of customers stretched out the door and onto the sidewalk, where they chatted amiably and seemed happy to be there. I left, came back another day and discovered the place was closed. The third time was the charm. When I opened the door on a recent wintery Saturday afternoon, owner and baker Janet Garretson was the only other person in the shop. My status as sole customer didn't last long, but by then I'd had a chance to peruse the possibilities, talk to Janet and make my purchases.

In this age of factory-assembled desserts, it's hard to find a really good piece of pie — the kind that was just baked, with a crust as fine and interesting as the tasty fruit and fresh spices inside. It's hard to find a good savory pie, too, or a dumpling. When you stand in front of a display case brimming with all the above, choosing one is difficult.

So I didn't choose one. I chose a variety of pies and brought them home to share with friends. Lucky me. Lucky friends. This is our report:

Triple Chocolate Pecan is a knockout, mesmerizing to those of us who are equally enchanted with three kinds of chocolate and pecans. It's rich, but no matter how many times you put your fork down, you pick it up again for just one more bite.

Berry Cherry Pie was excellent, with cherries that tasted fresh, and a perfect balance between tart and sweet. This pie won the Heavy Table's Upper Midwestern Pie Tasting contest in the summer of 2011, chosen from 14 bakers' offerings.

The Triple Berry Pie was very good, with blueberry and raspberry flavors trading places on the tongue with every new bite.

The Double Lemon Pie was a dream, too, as was the Peanut Butter Fudge Pie.

I'm no great fan of coconut cream, but it was voted wonderful by someone who is a fan.

Unsampled from that day's menu, written in chalk on an old blackboard mounted on the wall, were: chocolate cream, raisin sour cream, apple, apple crisp, caramel apple crunch, blueberry and pecan.

Lots more kinds are available on occasion or by request.

Dessert pies all cost \$4 a slice. Six-inch whole pies are \$6.40, and 10-inch whole pies are \$18. Savory pies and pot pies are \$6.25.

I did sit down to eat a warm piece of savory pie (apple, sausage and cheese). It was a rich and filling winter dish — so much so that next time I'll ask for it without the cheese on top. It was seasoned with apple pie spices, but they had a different resonance when baked in a savory pie.

The chicken pot pie was "exceptional" and "very comforting," which

Above: The Stockholm Pie Company is in the corner of this building, which was built across the street in 1901 to serve as a general store. After a flood destroyed its foundation in 1915 and the stone building at its current site burned down, the building was towed across the street by horses and installed in its present location.

Left: Janet Garretson prepares all the pies by hand.

