**PIZZA AND THE CITY - 001**

Dough Pizza Bar

There is an expectation that when Lagos people interact with indie/cagey establishments with industry-specific buzzwords, sparks fly - but for all the wrong reasons. We just love a good gatekeep. A place where we can call our own, while still wanting enough people to know about it, but specifically know that you knew about it first, while still being ‘full’ enough to maintain the ever so elusive ‘vibes’ that you crave, without being too ‘casted’. Gross.

Although, I must admit that it is a tightrope for sure. Let’s not act like there isn’t an allure to having a place you call your own. But the issue tends to be that these places - when designed from the ground up to suit the aforementioned lagosian’s ‘repetitional palette’ leave very much to be desired outside of the exclusivity.

Having said that, I can wholeheartedly say that I am grateful that they are so difficult to find. Customer acquisition be dammed. That sweet, sweet retention is where it’s all at. That’s right! SURPRISE! THIS WRITER’S A DAMN GATEKEEPER (a bit counterintuitive, I admit, to be writing this blog in that case, but oh well. Reason be damned).

Enter Dough Pizza, run by generational pizza-shop duo, brothers, Son of Lebanese Pizza Father 1, and Son of Lebanese Pizza Father 2. They’ve been in the game for a bit (at least, in their blood, anyway. This is their first pizza venture), and that should mean something. However, it oftentimes doesn’t, which is - amusingly - to be expected.

Located in some random corner of VI, this place is tight, cosy, rustic and welcoming all at once. Mellow tones, lots of wood and metal, and ‘Old Skool’ Hip-Hop blaring from the speakers. It has ‘millennial burger place’ written all over it, but somehow it comes off as authentic? Idk. Anyway, it’s reservations only, which is amusing because the place is always empty, but when you consider how small their space is (they swear they will never expand) and how late they open (5pm methinks), you can appreciate that theres a real fear that the place gets really crowded, really quickly. Also, lest we forget, the all-too-important illusion of exclusivity that comes from a res-only place. Anywho, I’ll try to just walk in one day. No shot they turn me away.

They offer ‘London Style’ pizza, which, to a pIzza person, means as much as saying ‘London Style’ Jollof rice; that is - not a whole lot. Which makes it even more perplexing when all their marketing (primarily customer driven, to be fair) doesn’t just shut up about ‘New York Style Pizza’. “Lagos’ first New York-Style Pizza” “Finally trying New York-Style Pizza” “Come with me and -“ You get the drift. So what exactly is going on here? Are these people just consumed by the hype and regurgitating whatever buzzword the last influencer they came across, who, inadvertently, force-fed them the same shitty opinion they would no-doubt have gone on to spread to some unsuspecting civilian, or, worse yet, another caca peddling influencer? Are they stupid?

Well, turns out these guys just do New York Style Pizza, but with:

1. A special crust that was inspired by their time in London
2. Most importantly, hot honey, which (apparently) is a Machination of London design.

Disappointing conclusion to what was set up to be a delectable culinary mystery? Sure. But whatever you can do to place a stamp of originality on your brand, should it have even the slightest bit of merit, I can stand behind it. It’s tough out there to make a name for yourself.

But now that that’s out of the way, how did it actually taste?

Eh. It was pretty good.

If pretty good is absolutely delicious (hehe). Stellar work from the team, who would be well known in the Lagos’ party scene I’m sure. Wonderful crust the right amount (and type) of cheese, and a fantastically spiced tomato sauce. Furthermore, the vodka sauce as a dip is to die for. Would love to try it as a base. Their hot honey(tm (in Lagos, apparently)) was also great, but was 2nd in the pecking order for sure. Perhaps it is crafted specifically to work well with their hot salami, which I will try in due time, becauuuuuuseee… Drumroll…

This spot gets a **Return** **out of 10** rating. Have my eye on about 3 different pies on their menu, and I am 100% committed to trying them all. Would love to say it’s worth the hype, but it seems like hype has all but disappeared after Dirty December. ’ They seem to be walking the aforementioned tight rope for sure, but the showrunners are veterans in the business game, so I have hopes that they can keep their heads above water until the next big Lagos wave (conflicting metaphors, I know). A bit pricey for sure, but that’s the balance one must strike when offering a quality product to a small group, while still trying to run a business. My fingers are crossed very tightly for them, for me. Really solid spot. Best I’ve had in Lagos for sure.