



1. DANNY'S FULLY ASSEMBLED, NOT DROPPED PEPPERONI PIZZA 2. NASHVILLE HOT FRIED HOAGIE WITH SOME OF OUR FAVORITE WAFFLE FRIES

The Hangry'er Hobo

By Danny Fairchild

I could tell you that the pizza from the Hangry'er Hobo food truck is damn good pizza. In fact, I WILL tell you that. I'll even give it its own paragraph. Ready?

THE PIZZA FROM THE HANGRY'ER HOBO FOOD TRUCK IS DAMN GOOD PIZZA.

Yeah. Caps, even.

So I've told you the pizza is damn good pizza, but like... why should you believe me? Sure, it's part of the Hangry Hobo fleet which means they seriously give a damn about what they put out, but that only gets you so far. Because pizza is

subjective. I don't know your life. I don't know what you consider good pizza. For something that damn near everyone loves, pizza sure is divisive, isn't it?

How about this: Hangry'er Hobo's pizza is damn good pizza. But I would never PRESUME to tell YOU what good pizza is. There. Line toed.

But then, you ask, how do I tackle this column? I have an idea. Have any of you seen that episode of *Brooklyn 99* where the pizzeria gets burned down and Boyle, played by the ever-genius Joe Lo Truglio, talks about his pizza blog? He grades pizza based on the following metrics: structural integrity, sauce, texture, crust, cheese, and mouthfeel. There might be more. This took some piecing together. I'm not going to give Hangry'er Hobo pizza a score on any of these metrics, I'll just tell you about them and you can decide for yourself if that sounds like the kind of pizza you want to put in your pizza hole.

I'm just going to spare you and NOT talk about mouthfeel. Yes, you're welcome. I understand that mouthfeel is a nice

thing to EXPERIENCE, but it's a friggin disgusting thing to DISCUSS. I wouldn't talk about mouthfeel at the dinner table, so I won't talk about it here. Talking about mouthfeel is like chewing with your mouth open. "At first bite it coats your mouth with..." bleh. We're skipping it.

Hangry'er Hobo has a long, interesting list of specialty pizzas that look worthy of a try. I'm looking at you, The Kraut (hand-tossed crust, housemade sauce topped with provolone/mozzarella premium cheese blend, ham, and sauerkraut) and Honey Hot Sausage. But in the interest of neutrality for most who will read this, I stuck with pepperoni.

Structural integrity. You're going to look at this pizza and think it's built like a truck, truck, truck. Crust like what, what, what. Like maybe this is a pan pizza, or something. Oh, no, friends. Did you skip the above parentheses where I mentioned hand-tossed crust? Yeah, so this crust has some bend to it. I tried to take a picture doing a cheese stretch with a slice. As I was about to snap the

pic, I fumbled the slice. My fault. I wasn't thrown off by the bendability of the slice, I just screwed up. The toppings are so plentiful that if you drop it even from a little bit, some of those ingredients are coming off and ruin your shot for good. That said, you can easily hold a slice in your hand and not lose a damn thing. Just maybe put the camera down first.

Sauce. Oh, my. If it didn't ruin my off-the-cuff style, I'd go back and talk about sauce first. There are a lot of factors that, for me, make Hangry'er Hobo's a damn good pizza. The thing that sets Hangry'er Hobo's pizza apart from every other pizza in town, other than the whole food truck thing, is the sauce. I'm not a huge sauce fan, but that's just because I've been burned too many times. Burned in my heart AND on the roof of my mouth. But there's always been a part of me that wanted to get swept off my feet by a saucy little sauce. I didn't pull up to the truck expecting to meet the sauce of my dreams that day, but here I am. Finally in love with a pizza sauce. In case you still

missed that parenthetical, this is their own recipe. And it's glorious. It tastes brighter than my EDC flashlight. It boldly bumbles on stage, delivers its late-night monologue, introduces the guests and the band and gets the show STARTED. This sauce would be like a late-night host, if that were a timely analogy. Now... yes, late-night hosts can be obnoxious. And maybe you'll find this sauce to be a bit too "on." I don't. I think it's a revelation.

A few words on texture. We could get into mouthfeel territory talking about texture, so I'll be careful. Like I said, I got a pepperoni pizza. But look at that picture. The one I took before I tried to get cute with a beautiful cheese stretch, forcing a turnover. Those aren't the traditional round slices of pepperoni we're used to. Nope. This pepperoni is shredded and like... sure, beautiful red dots of pepperoni looks great, but why aren't more places shredding their pepperoni? Not to mention Hangry'er Hobo and frozen pizza in the same sentence, but you know when you open a frozen pepperoni pizza and you have to redistribute the pepperoni slices so they're evenly dispersed? It can't be just me. Anyway. Shredding pepperoni like this allows Hangry'er Hobo to sprinkle it on like cheese, dispersing it to the entirety of the pizza, creating a homogenous texture. Every bite is going to have enough pepperoni in it. Unless you're like me and you drop the slice while trying to get arty with something you're not an artist at, like photography. Then, yeah, you might end up missing some toppings.

Crust. I've talked about Hangry'er Hobo's crust a bit already, so this will be mostly supplemental. I mentioned that one might mistake this for a crust similar to a pan pizza like Pizza Hut. I don't know if you can see it in the photo, but it kind of has that oily sheen around the edges like it came from a treated pan. And we'd be fine with that, right? Most of us, anyway. But Hangry'er Hobo claims their crust to be hand-tossed, and I believe them.

Cheese. Gee, it sure would have been great if I could have gotten a pic of the beautiful stretch of the premium blend of provolone and mozzarella. If only somebody somewhat known for his deftness of fingers hadn't dropped it before the camera went click. If the visual of a good cheese stretch is appetizing for you, you are going to feast upon the sight. By "good cheese stretch" I mean that it stretches to resist your greedy grasp. It doesn't stretch and then sag under its own weight. It knows when to give up and give you your prize. Hangry'er Hobo delivers a good cheese stretch.

Bonus Content!
I went to Hangry'er Hobo with the assignment to highlight their pizza, only to

learn that they've also recently added hoagies and grinders to their menu. I already had a whole damn pizza to pictorially screw up, so I thought long and hard about what ONE sammich to get to tell the world about. Then the answer hit me in the face. Everybody loves a Nashville Hot Chicken sandwich these days. And I'm pretty sure everybody will love the Nashville Hot Fried Hoagie at Hangry'er Hobo. What are we talking here? We're talking deep-fried chicken breast with Nashville hot sauce, topped with feta cheese and Hangry'er Hobo's housemade ranch. The use of feta cheese is genius here. Before the heat of the Nashville hot sauce gets too much for you, the feta does what cheese does and brings relief. But it's a cheese that won't overpower the other flavors of Nashville sauce, and it adds a crumbled cheese texture you might get from blue cheese, but not everybody likes blue cheese.

The true miracle is how Hangry'er Hobo makes waffle fries that travel well. I love waffle fries. Possibly my favorite fry variation. But if they have to make a trip to a second location before you eat them, chances are they're getting soggy. Still good, but not optimal. Somehow these waffle fries made it home crispy. I'm shocked. Surely they employ magic and I want the spell. ■

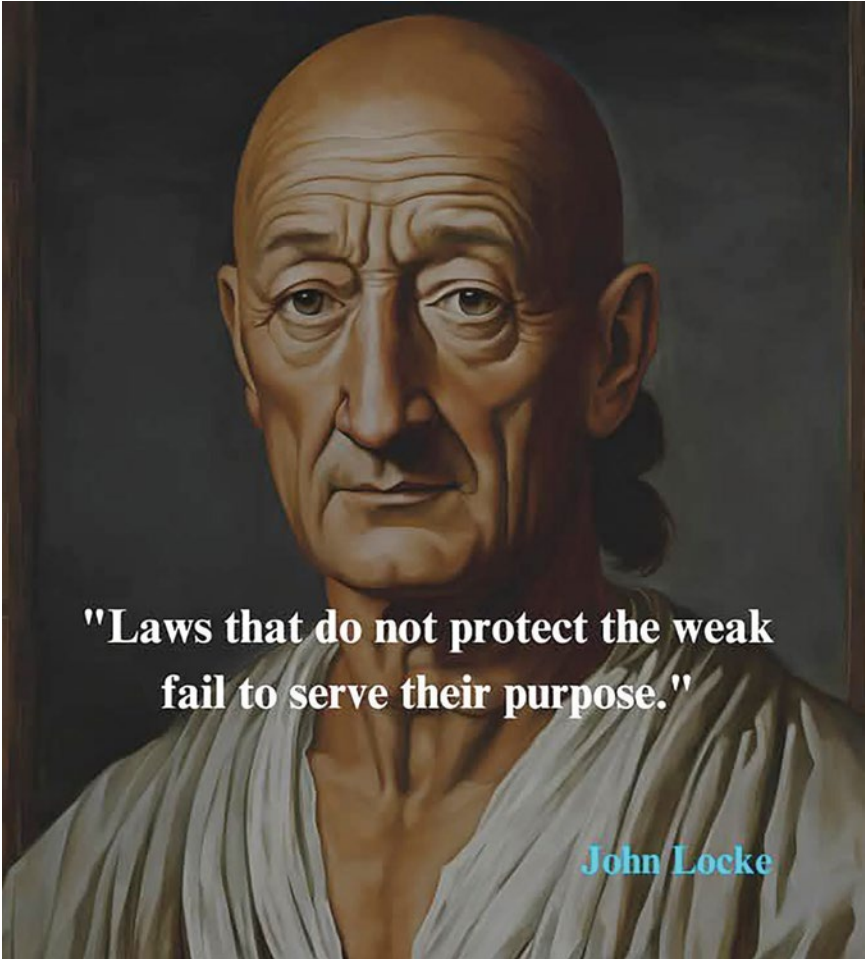


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