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# Pizza

**Pizza**<sup>[a][1]</sup> is an Italian, specifically Neapolitan, dish typically consisting of a flat base of leavened wheat-based dough topped with tomato, cheese, and other ingredients, baked at a high temperature, traditionally in a wood-fired oven.

The term *pizza* was first recorded in 997 AD, in a Latin manuscript from the southern Italian town of Gaeta, in Lazio, on the border with Campania.<sup>[2]</sup> Raffaele Esposito is often credited for creating the modern pizza in Naples.<sup>[3][4][5][6]</sup> In 2009, Neapolitan pizza<sup>[7]</sup> was registered with the European Union as a traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) dish. In 2017, the art of making Neapolitan pizza was included on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage.<sup>[8]</sup>

Pizza and its variants are among the most popular foods in the world. Pizza is sold at a variety of restaurants, including pizzerias (pizza specialty restaurants), Mediterranean restaurants, via delivery, and as street food.<sup>[9]</sup> In Italy, pizza served in a restaurant is presented unsliced, and is eaten with the use of a knife and fork.<sup>[10][11]</sup> In casual settings, however, it is typically cut into slices to be eaten while held in the hand. Pizza is also sold in grocery stores in a variety of forms, including frozen or as kits for self-assembly. Store-bought pizzas are then cooked using a home oven.

In 2017, the world pizza market was US\$128 billion, and in the US it was \$44 billion spread over 76,000 pizzerias.<sup>[12]</sup> Overall, 13% of the US population aged two years and over consumed pizza on any given day.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Etymology

The oldest recorded usage of the word *pizza* is thought to be from May 997 CE, appearing in the *Codex diplomaticus Caietanus*, a notarial Latin document from the town of Gaeta, then still part of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>[14]</sup> The text states that a tenant of certain property is to give the bishop of Gaeta *duodecim pizze* (lit. 'twelve pizzas'),<sup>[15]</sup> a pork shoulder and kidney annually on Christmas Day, and twelve pizzas and a couple of chickens annually on Easter Sunday.<sup>[16]</sup>

Suggested etymologies include:

- Byzantine Greek and Late Latin *pitta* > *pizza*, cf. Modern Greek pitta bread and the Apulia and Calabrian (then Byzantine Italy) *pitta*,<sup>[17]</sup> a round flat bread baked in the oven at high temperature sometimes with toppings. The word *pitta* can in turn be traced to either Ancient Greek πικτή (*pikte*), 'fermented pastry', which in Latin became *picta*, or Ancient Greek πίσσα (*pissa*, Attic: πίττα, *pitta*), 'pitch',<sup>[18][19]</sup> or πήτεια (*pētea*), 'bran' (πητίτης, *pētītēs*, 'bran bread').<sup>[20]</sup>
- The *Etymological Dictionary of the Italian Language* explains it as coming from dialectal *pinza*, 'clamp', as in modern Italian *pinze*, 'pliers, pincers, tongs, forceps'. Their origin is from Latin *pinsere*, 'to pound, stamp'.<sup>[21]</sup>

Pizza



A pizza divided into eight slices

Type	<u>Flatbread</u>
Course	One course meal
Place of origin	<u>Italy</u>
Region or state	<u>Naples</u> , <u>Campania</u>
Serving temperature	Hot or warm
Main ingredients	Dough, sauce (usually <u>tomato sauce</u> ), cheese (typically <u>mozzarella</u> )
Similar dishes	<u>Calzone</u> , <u>panzerotti</u>

 Media: Pizza

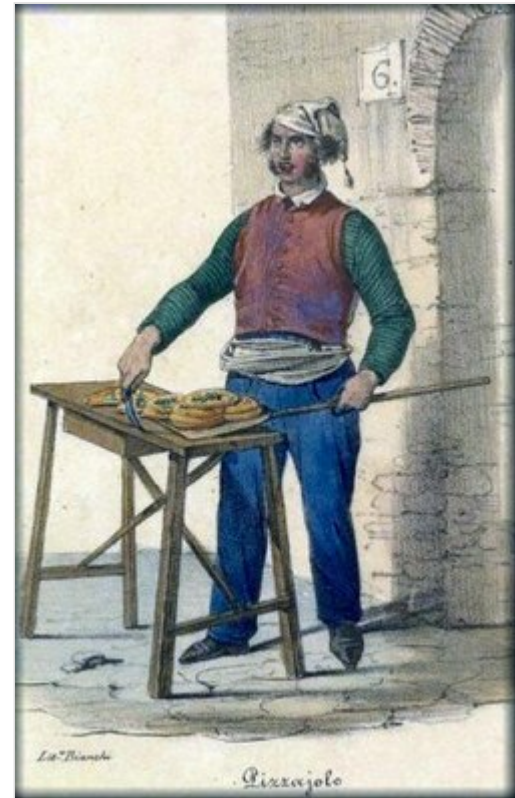
- The Lombardic word *bizzo* or *pizzo*, meaning 'mouthful' (related to the English words *bit* and *bite*), which was brought to Italy in the middle of the 6th century AD by the invading Lombards.<sup>[2][22]</sup> The shift b→p could be explained by the High German consonant shift, and it has been noted in this connection that in German the word *Imbiss* means 'snack'.

A small pizza is sometimes called *pizzetta*.<sup>[23]</sup> A person who makes pizza is known as a *pizzaiolo*.<sup>[24]</sup>

The word *pizza* was borrowed from Italian into English in the 1930s; before it became well known, pizza was called "tomato pie" by English speakers. Some regional pizza variations still use the name tomato pie.<sup>[25]</sup>

## History

Records of pizza-like foods can be found throughout ancient history. In the 6th century BC, the Persian soldiers of the Achaemenid Empire during the rule of Darius the Great baked flatbreads with cheese and dates on top of their battle shields<sup>[26][27]</sup> and the ancient Greeks supplemented their bread with oils, herbs, and cheese.<sup>[28][29]</sup> An early reference to a pizza-like food occurs in the *Aeneid*, when Celaeno, queen of the Harpies, foretells that the Trojans would not find peace until they are forced by hunger to eat their tables (Book III). In Book VII, Aeneas and his men are served a meal that includes round cakes (such as pita bread) topped with cooked vegetables. When they eat the bread, they realize that these are the "tables" prophesied by Celaeno.<sup>[30]</sup> In 2023, archeologists discovered a fresco in Pompeii appearing to depict a pizza-like dish among other foodstuffs and staples on a silver platter. Italy's culture minister said it "may be a distant ancestor of the modern dish".<sup>[31][32]</sup> The first mention of the word *pizza* seemingly comes from a notarial document written in Latin and dating to 997 CE from Gaeta, demanding a payment of "twelve pizzas, a pork shoulder, and a pork kidney on Christmas Day, and 12 pizzas and a couple of chickens on Easter Day".<sup>[16]</sup>



An illustration from 1830 of a *pizzaiolo* in Naples

Modern pizza evolved from similar flatbread dishes in Naples, Italy, in the 18th or early 19th century.<sup>[33]</sup> Before that time, flatbread was often topped with ingredients such as garlic, salt, lard, and cheese. It is uncertain when tomatoes were first added and there are many conflicting claims,<sup>[33]</sup> although it certainly could not have been before the 16th century and the Columbian Exchange. Pizza was sold from open-air stands and out of pizza bakeries until about 1830, when pizzerias in Naples started to have *stanze* with tables where clients could sit and eat their pizzas on the spot.<sup>[34]</sup>

A popular legend holds that the archetypal pizza, pizza Margherita,<sup>[35]</sup> was invented in 1889, when the Royal Palace of Capodimonte commissioned the Neapolitan *pizzaiolo* ('pizza maker') Raffaele Esposito to create a pizza in honor of the visiting Queen Margherita. Of the three different pizzas he created, the queen strongly preferred a pizza swathed in the colors of the Italian flag—red (tomato), white (mozzarella), and green (basil). Supposedly, this type of pizza was then named after the queen,<sup>[36]</sup> with an official letter of recognition from the queen's "head of service" remaining to this day on display in Esposito's shop, now called the Pizzeria Brandi.<sup>[37]</sup> Later research cast doubt on this legend, undermining the authenticity of the letter of recognition, pointing that no media of the period reported about the supposed visit and that both the story and name Margherita were first promoted in the 1930s–1940s.<sup>[38][39]</sup>

Pizza was taken to the United States by Italian immigrants in the late 19th century<sup>[40]</sup> and first appeared in areas where they concentrated. The country's first pizzeria, Lombardi's, opened in New York City in 1905.<sup>[41]</sup> Italian Americans migrating from East to West brought the dish with them, and from there, the American version was exported to the rest of the world.<sup>[42]</sup>

The Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana (lit. 'True Neapolitan Pizza Association') is a non-profit organization founded in 1984 with headquarters in Naples that aims to promote traditional Neapolitan pizza.<sup>[43]</sup> In 2009, upon Italy's request, Neapolitan pizza was registered with the European Union as a traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) dish,<sup>[44][45]</sup> and in 2017 the art of its making was included on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage.<sup>[8]</sup>

## Preparation

Pizza is sold fresh or frozen, whole or in portion-size slices. Methods have been developed to overcome challenges such as preventing the sauce from combining with the dough, and producing a crust that can be frozen and reheated without becoming rigid. There are frozen pizzas with raw ingredients and self-rising crusts.

In the US, another form of pizza is available from take and bake pizzerias. This pizza is assembled in the store, then sold unbaked to customers to bake in their own ovens. Some grocery stores sell fresh dough along with sauce and basic ingredients, to assemble at home before baking in an oven.

### Pizza preparation



Pizza dough being kneaded before being left undisturbed and allowed time to proof



Tossing pizza dough to stretch it



An unbaked Neapolitan pizza on a metal peel, ready for the oven



A wrapped, mass-produced frozen pizza to be baked at home



# Baking

In restaurants, pizza can be baked in an oven with fire bricks above the heat source, an electric deck oven, a conveyor belt oven, or in traditional style in a wood or coal-fired brick oven. The pizza is slid into the oven on a long paddle, called "peel", and baked directly on hot bricks, a screen (a round metal grate, typically aluminum), or whatever the oven surface is. Before use, a peel is typically sprinkled with cornmeal to allow the pizza to easily slide on and off it.<sup>[46]</sup> When made at home, a pizza can be baked on a pizza stone in a regular oven to reproduce some of the heating effect of a brick oven. Cooking directly on a metal surface results in too rapid heat transfer to the crust, burning it.<sup>[47]</sup> Some home chefs use a wood-fired pizza oven, usually installed outdoors. As in restaurants, these are often dome-shaped, as pizza ovens have been for centuries,<sup>[48]</sup> in order to achieve even heat distribution. Another variation is grilled pizza, in which the pizza is baked directly on a barbecue grill. Some types, such as Sicilian pizza, are baked in a pan rather than directly on the bricks of the pizza oven.

Most restaurants use standard and purpose-built pizza preparation tables to assemble their pizzas. Mass production of pizza by chains can be completely automated.

## Pizza baking



Pizzas baking in a traditional wood-fired brick oven



A pizza being removed with a wooden peel



A pizza Margherita



Charred crust on a pizza Margherita, an acceptable trait in artisanal pizza



Pizza grilling on an outdoor gas range

# Crust

The bottom of the pizza, called the "crust", may vary widely according to style—thin as in a typical hand-tossed Neapolitan pizza or thick as in a deep-dish Chicago-style. It is traditionally plain, but may also be seasoned with garlic or herbs, or stuffed with cheese. The outer edge of the pizza is sometimes referred to as the *cornicione*.<sup>[49]</sup> Some pizza dough contains sugar, to help its yeast rise and enhance browning of the crust.<sup>[50]</sup>

## Cheese

Mozzarella is commonly used on pizza, with the buffalo mozzarella produced in the surroundings of Naples.<sup>[51]</sup> Other cheeses are also used, particularly burrata, Gorgonzola, provolone, *pecorino romano*, ricotta, and *scamorza*. Less expensive processed cheeses or cheese analogues have been developed for mass-market pizzas to produce desirable qualities such as browning, melting, stretchiness, consistent fat and moisture content, and stable shelf life. This quest to create the ideal and economical pizza cheese has involved many studies and experiments analyzing the impact of vegetable oil, manufacturing and culture processes, denatured whey proteins, and other changes in manufacture. In 1997, it was estimated that annual production of pizza cheese was 1 million metric tons (1,100,000 short tons) in the US and 100,000 metric tons (110,000 short tons) in Europe.<sup>[52]</sup>

## Varieties and styles

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A great number of pizza varieties exist, defined by the choice of toppings and sometimes also crust. There are also several styles of pizza, defined by their preparation method. The following lists feature only the notable ones.

# Varieties

Pizza varieties



Image	Name	Characteristic ingredients	Origin	First attested	Notes
	<u>Pizza Margherita</u>	Tomatoes, mozzarella, basil.	<u>Naples</u> , Italy	June 1889	The archetypical <u>Neapolitan pizza</u> .
	<u>Pizza marinara</u>	Tomato sauce, olive oil, oregano, garlic. No cheese.	Naples, Italy	1734	One of the oldest Neapolitan pizza.
	<u>Pizza capricciosa</u>	Ham, mushrooms, artichokes, egg.	Rome, <u>Lazio</u> , Italy	1937	Similar to <u>pizza quattro stagioni</u> , but with toppings mixed rather than separated.
	<u>Pizza quattro formaggi</u>	Prepared using four types of cheese (Italian: [ <span><span><span></span><sup><span>i</span></sup></span><span><span>ˈ</span><span>k</span><span>w</span><span>a</span><span>t</span><span>t</span><span>r</span><span>o</span></span> <span><span>f</span><span>o</span><span>r</span></span> <span><span>m</span><span>a</span><span>d</span><span>dʒ</span><span>i</span></span>], 'four cheeses'): mozzarella, Gorgonzola and two others depending on the region.</span>	<u>Lazio</u> , Italy	Its origins are not clearly documented, but it is believed to originate from the Lazio region at the beginning of the 18th century. <sup>[53]</sup>	
	<u>Pizza quattro stagioni</u>	Artichokes, mushroom, ham, tomatoes.	<u>Campania</u> , Italy		The toppings are separated by quarter, representing the cycle of the seasons.
	<u>Seafood pizza</u>	Seafood, such as fish, shellfish or squid.	Italy		Subvarieties include <i>pizza ai frutti di mare</i> (no cheese) and <i>pizza pescatore</i> (with mussels or squid).



Styles

Pizza styles

Image	Name	Characteristics	Origin	First attested
	<u>Calzone</u>	Pizza folded in half <u>turnover</u> -style.	<u>Naples</u> , Italy	1700s
	Deep fried <u>pizza</u> ( <u>pizza fritta</u> )	The pizza is <u>deep fried</u> (cooked in oil) instead of baked.	Naples, Italy	
	<u>Pizzetta</u>	Small pizza served as an <u>hors d'oeuvre</u> or <u>snack</u> .	Italy	
	<u>California-style pizza</u>	Distinguished by the use of non-traditional ingredients, especially varieties of fresh produce.	<u>California</u> , U.S.	1980
	<u>Chicago-style pizza</u>	Baked in a pan with a high edge that holds in a thick layer of toppings. The crust is sometimes stuffed with cheese or other ingredients.	<u>Chicago</u> , U.S.	c. 1940s
	<u>Colorado-style pizza</u>	Made with a characteristically thick, braided crust topped with heavy amounts of sauce and cheese. It is traditionally served by the pound, with a side of honey as a condiment.	<u>Colorado</u> , U.S.	1973
	<u>Detroit-style pizza</u>	The cheese is spread to the edges and caramelizes against the high-sided heavyweight rectangular pan, giving the crust a lacy, crispy edge.	<u>Detroit</u> , U.S.	1946

Image	Name	Characteristics	Origin	First attested
	<u>New York–style pizza</u>	Neapolitan-derived pizza with a characteristic thin foldable crust.	<u>New York metropolitan area (and beyond)</u>	Early 1900s
	<u>St. Louis–style pizza</u>	The style has a thin cracker-like crust made without yeast, generally uses Provel cheese, and is cut into squares or rectangles instead of wedges.	<u>St. Louis, U.S.</u>	1945

## By region of origin

### Italy

Authentic Neapolitan pizza (Italian: *pizza napoletana*) is made with San Marzano tomatoes, grown on the volcanic plains south of Mount Vesuvius, and either mozzarella di bufala campana, made with milk from water buffalo raised in the marshlands of Campania and Lazio,<sup>[55]</sup> or fior di latte.<sup>[56]</sup> Buffalo mozzarella is protected with its own European protected designation of origin (PDO).<sup>[55]</sup> Other traditional pizzas include pizza marinara, supposedly the most ancient tomato-topped pizza,<sup>[57]</sup> pizza capricciosa, which is prepared with mozzarella cheese, baked ham, mushroom, artichoke, and tomato.<sup>[58]</sup>



The ingredients of traditional pizza Margherita—tomatoes (red), mozzarella (white), and basil (green)—are held by popular legend to be inspired by the colors of the national flag of Italy.<sup>[54]</sup>

A popular variant of pizza in Italy is Sicilian pizza,<sup>[59][60]</sup> a thick-crust or deep-dish pizza originating during the 17th century in Sicily: it is essentially a focaccia that is typically topped with tomato sauce and other ingredients. Until the 1860s, Sicilian pizza was the type of pizza usually consumed in Sicily, especially in the Western portion of the island.<sup>[61]</sup> Other variations of pizzas are also found in other regions of Italy, for example pizza al padellino or pizza al tegamino, a small-sized, thick-crust, deep-dish pizza typically served in Turin, Piedmont.<sup>[62][63][64]</sup>

### United States

The first pizzeria in the US was opened in New York City's Little Italy in 1905.<sup>[65]</sup> Common toppings for pizza in the United States include anchovies, ground beef, chicken, ham, mushrooms, olives, onions, peppers, pepperoni, pineapple, salami, sausage, spinach, steak, and tomatoes. Distinct regional types developed in the 20th century, including Buffalo,<sup>[66]</sup> California, Chicago, Detroit, Greek, New Haven, New York, and St. Louis styles.<sup>[67]</sup> These regional variations include deep-dish, stuffed, pockets, turnovers, rolled, and pizza-on-a-stick, each with seemingly limitless combinations of sauce and toppings.



Pizza banquet in the White House serving Chicago-style pizza (2009)



Thirteen percent of the United States population consumes pizza on any given day.<sup>[68]</sup> Pizza chains such as Domino's Pizza, Pizza Hut, and Papa John's, pizzas from take and bake pizzerias, and chilled or frozen pizzas from supermarkets make pizza readily available nationwide.

## Argentina

Argentine pizza is a mainstay of the country's cuisine,<sup>[69]</sup> especially of its capital Buenos Aires, where it is regarded as a cultural heritage and icon of the city.<sup>[70][71][72]</sup> Argentina is the country with the most pizzerias per inhabitant in the world and, although they are consumed throughout the country, the highest concentration of pizzerias and customers is Buenos Aires, the city with the highest consumption of pizzas in the world (estimated in 2015 to be 14 million per year).<sup>[73]</sup> As such, the city has been considered as one of the world capitals of pizza.<sup>[71][73]</sup> The dish was introduced to Buenos Aires in the late 19th century with the massive Italian immigration, as part of a broader great European immigration wave to the country.<sup>[71]</sup> Thus, around the same time that the iconic pizza Margherita<sup>[74]</sup> was being invented in Italy, pizza were already being cooked in the Argentine capital.<sup>[75]</sup> The impoverished Italian immigrants that arrived to the city transformed the originally modest dish into a much more hefty meal, motivated by the abundance of food in Argentina.<sup>[73][76]</sup> In the 1930s, pizza was cemented as a cultural icon in Buenos Aires, with the new pizzerias becoming a central space for sociability for the working class people who flocked to the city.<sup>[76][75]</sup>

The most characteristic style of Argentine pizza—which almost all the classic pizzerias in Buenos Aires specialize in—is the so-called *pizza de molde* (Spanish for 'pizza in the pan'), characterized by having a "thick, spongy base and elevated bready crust".<sup>[71]</sup> This style, which today is identified as the typical style of Argentine pizza—characterized by a thick crust and a large amount of cheese—arose when impoverished Italian immigrants found a greater abundance of food in then-prosperous Argentina, which motivated them to transform the originally modest dish into a much more hefty meal suitable for a main course.<sup>[73][76]</sup> The name *pizza de molde* emerged because there were no pizza ovens in the city, so bakers resorted to baking them in pans.<sup>[77]</sup> Since they used bakery plates, Argentine pizzas were initially square or rectangular, a format associated with the 1920s that is still maintained in some classic pizzerias, especially for vegetable pizzas, *fugazzetas* or *fugazzas*.<sup>[77]</sup>

Other styles of Argentine pizza include the iconic *fugazza* and its derivative *fugazzeta* or *fugazza con queso* (a terminology that varies depending on the pizzeria),<sup>[71]</sup> or the *pizza de cancha* or *canchera* (a cheese-less variant).<sup>[78]</sup> Most pizza menus include standard flavor combinations, including the traditional plain mozzarella, nicknamed "*muza*" or "*musa*"; the *napolitana* or "*napo*", with "cheese, sliced tomatoes, garlic, dried oregano and a few green olives", not to be confused with Neapolitan pizza;<sup>[71]</sup> *calabresa*, with slices of *longaniza*;<sup>[79]</sup> *jamon y morrones*, with sliced ham and roasted bell peppers;<sup>[71]</sup> as well as versions with provolone, with anchovies,<sup>[79]</sup> with hearts of palm, or with chopped hard boiled egg.<sup>[71]</sup> A typical custom that is unique to Buenos Aires is to accompany pizza with *fainá*, a pancake made from chickpea flour.<sup>[80]</sup>

## Dessert pizza

The terms *dessert pizza* and *sweet pizza* are used for a variety of dishes resembling a pizza, including chocolate pizza and fruit pizza.<sup>[81][82]</sup> Some are based on a traditional yeast dough pizza base,<sup>[83]</sup> while others have a cookie-like base<sup>[84]</sup> and resemble a traditional pizza solely in having a flat round shape with a distinct



Caramelized crust of slices of New York–style pizza



Traditional Argentine-style pizzas de molde being prepared at a pizzeria in Buenos Aires

base and topping. Some pizza restaurants offer dessert pizzas.<sup>[85][86]</sup>

## Nutrition

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Some pizzas mass-produced by American pizza chains have been criticized as having an unhealthy balance of ingredients. Pizza can be high in salt and fat, and is high in calories. The USDA reports an average sodium content of 5,100 mg per 14 in (36 cm) pizza in fast food chains.<sup>[87][88][89]</sup>

## Similar dishes

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- Calzone and stromboli are similar dishes that are often made of pizza dough folded (calzone) or rolled (stromboli) around a filling.
- Coca is a similar dish consumed mainly in Catalonia and neighboring regions, but that has extended to other areas in Spain, and to Algeria. There are sweet and savory versions.
- Farinata or cecina is a Ligurian (*farinata*) and Tuscan (*cecina*) regional dish.<sup>[90]</sup> It is often baked in a brick oven, and typically weighed and sold by the slice.
- Flammekueche is a food speciality of the Alsace region.
- Focaccia is a flat leavened oven-baked Italian bread, similar in style and texture to pizza; in some places, it is called *pizza bianca* (lit. 'white pizza').<sup>[91]</sup>
- Garlic fingers is an Atlantic Canadian dish, similar to a pizza in shape and size, and made with similar dough. It is garnished with melted butter, garlic, cheese, and sometimes bacon.
- İçli pide, or simply *pide*, is a Turkish dish, similar to a pizza in being made of wheat-based dough topped with tomato, cheese, and other ingredients, and usually formed in a boat-like shape.
- Khachapuri is a Georgian cheese-filled bread.
- Lahmacun is a Middle Eastern flatbread topped with minced meat; the base is very thin, and the layer of meat often includes chopped vegetables.<sup>[92]</sup>
- Manakish is a Levantine flatbread dish.
- Matzah pizza is a Jewish pizza dish.
- Panzerotti are similar to calzones, but fried rather than baked.
- Pastrmalija is a bread pie made from dough and meat. It is usually oval-shaped with chopped meat on top of it.
- Piadina is a thin Italian flatbread, typically prepared in the Romagna historical region.
- Pissaladière is similar to an Italian pizza, with a slightly thicker crust and a topping of cooked onions, anchovies, and olives.
- Pizza bagel is a bagel with toppings similar to that of traditional pizzas.
- Okonomiyaki, often referred to as "Japanese pizza", is a Japanese dish cooked on a hotplate.<sup>[93]</sup>
- Pizza cake is a multiple-layer pizza.
- Pizza rolls are a frozen snack product.
- Pizza strips is a tomato pie of Italian-American origin.
- Wähe is a Swiss type of tart.
- Zanzibar pizza is a street food served in Stone Town, Zanzibar, Tanzania. It uses a dough much thinner than pizza dough, almost like filo dough, filled with minced beef, onions, and an egg, similar to Moroccan *bastilla*.<sup>[94]</sup>
- Zwiebelkuchen is a German onion tart, often baked with diced bacon and caraway seeds.




Focaccia al rosmarino



Panzerotti

# See also

 Media related to Pizzas at Wikimedia Commons

- List of baked goods
- List of pizza chains
- List of pizza varieties by country
- Pizza cheese – cheese for use specifically on pizza
- Pizza delivery – service in which a pizzeria delivers pizza to a customer
- Pizza farm – farm split into sections like a pizza split into slices
- Pizza party – social gathering at which pizza is eaten
- Pizza saver – object used to prevent the top of a food container from collapsing
- Pizza theorem – equality of areas of alternating sectors of a disk with equal angles through any interior point



## Notes

a. English: /ˈpiːtsə/ *PEET-sə*, Italian: [ˈpittsa]; Neapolitan: [ˈpittsə]

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