



PIZZA



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Historical Context of Pizza:

- **Pizza as we know it today originated in Naples, Italy, starting within the 18th century.**
- **Traditional Pizzas were originally made for the impoverished, by the impoverished. This style of food was greeted well by the poor Italians (Lazzaronis) as it was cheap to make and quick to eat.**
- **This was important because the rising industry meant low wage jobs and short breaks in between work to eat.**



Evolution of Pizza:



- **In Italy pre-WWII pizza was eaten by the large numbers of impoverished urban workers and rural peasants because it is inexpensive and nutrient and calorie dense.**
- **Historically, pizza began as a simple flatbread with toppings but quickly evolved to be a unique type of “folk cuisine”. This style of cuisine allowed for basic ingredients to be combined to create a myriad of different flavor profiles.**
- **Modern pizza evolved from a more basic flatbread called “white pizza”, which was often topped simply with mostly whitish ingredients including garlic, animal fat, and salt.**

Pizza Uses and Notable Ingredients



- **Though the tomato was cultivated in Italy as early as the 17th century, the inclusion of the tomato as part of a classic pizza did not occur until around the 18th century (mostly in the southern provinces). This is because most Europeans believed tomatoes to be poisonous.**
- **At the beginning of its popularization, pizza was considered largely a to-go or, “street food”, though some vendors began setting up tables for customers to sit down to enjoy their meal.**
- **Pizza was looked down upon by non-Neapolitans, as it was seen to be a food meant for the poorest of the lower classes called the, “Lazzaroni”.**

Pizza Stereotypes:

- **For the most impoverished, pizza was unique and convenient as it could be cut to a size the customer could afford.**
- **Also, most Lazzaroni were too poor to afford their own kitchens and were thusly forced to survive on street food out of necessity.**
- **Pizza was also stereotyped as a food for vagrant street youth who were able to lounge around at pizzerias for many hours while having little money to spend.**



- **Despite its initial stereotype as a food reserved for the lower-classes, it is rumored that many upper-class patrons grew to develop a taste for pizza.**

How the Pizza Margherita Got its Name:

- **Most famously, Queen Margherita, who tried the “Pizza alla Mozzarella” while visiting Naples. After tasting the pizza, she declared it her favorite, and it was hence renamed the “Pizza Margherita”, which we will be one of the two pizzas we will be making for you to sample today!!**
- **There is some debate about when pizza made its transition from a low-class food to a food universally enjoyed by all classes.**



- **Some argue this transition occurred in the beginning of the 18th century. Others argue that pizza remained a street food for much longer, and only gradually made its way to the upper classes in the mid to late 18th century.**

Who Ate Pizza? Where? and Why?

- **In the fascist period (1922-1945) pizza remained a more specialized, localized dish.**
- **It is not until post-WWII that pizza gained its notoriety throughout the rest of Italy.**
- **Some claim that British soldiers contributed to the spread of pizzas popularity. It is rumored that after they had pizza in Southern Italy, then began requesting it wherever they travelled.**
- **Others claim that events prompting great waves of migration and tourism were responsible for pizzas rise into popularity.**
- **Chiefly, the large migration of Southern Italians to Northern Italy between the 1950's and 60's, and also the influx of middle and even working-class tourists. are also noteworthy explanations.**



When Pizza Reached Mass Popularity:

- In the 1970's, all Italians began eating more street food. Pizza evolved to be highly specialized and, closely associated with certain cities and regions as locals optimized on the tastes and ingredients of their specific regions and provinces.



- These factors prompted vendors to begin selling dishes from many regions of Italy to tourists and those who may be unable to travel due to constraints on their time and money.
- This increase in foreign tourism in the 1960's lead to pizzas rise to popularity in the United States as well as worldwide.

Methods of Preparing Pizza:

- In Rome Italy, pizzas with thin crusts are more desired. While in Molise, a thicker corn-based crust topped with local greens is the preferred recipe.
- Also, around the 1970's, sit-down family type meals, as well “pizza a taglio”, or a variety of ready-to-go slices cut to order, became popularized across Italy.
- These methods of serving and consuming pizza mirror the traditions and convenience now observed by pizza lovers throughout the world.



World's Original Pizza Restaurant in Naples, Italy



Why People in the past enjoyed this food?

Cultural:

- **Neapolitan pizza was prepared and named for the first queen of Italy. (Queen Margherita).**
- **Pizza was an affordable and alternative meal that could be enjoyed by all different classes of families that could be prepared quickly**
- **Pizza was a source of national and regional pride. It also provided a sense of cultural identity in Italy, (C, Helstosky, Pizza: A Global History)**
- **When Italian immigrants moved to America, they brought the Neapolitan pizza with them and the pizza became America's most popular dish.**

Why People in the past enjoyed this food?

Biological:

- **Local Italians enjoyed the pizza because the dish consisted of local ingredients.**
- **The flavours and aromas of the pizza intrigued non-Neapolitans and non-Italians.**
- **Pizza was a food that provided access to all major food groups.**

What are the Ingredients of a Margherita pizza and Why?

- **Dough: Cake Compressed Yeast (Fresh), Warm Water, Pastry Flour, Salt & Unbleached All-Purpose Flour**
- **Toppings: Peeled Tomatoes, Real Mozzarella, Fresh Basil, Salt, Extra-Virgin Olive Oil**
- **Ingredients chosen for many of the traditional pizzas in Naples tended to be based on their availability and how cheap they were. Being that pizza was originally made for the poor in Italy (the *lazzaroni*), the cost of them had to stay low and therefore so did the ingredients.**
- **The ingredients of pizza were also used to represent the colours of the Italian flag: red(tomato), white (mozzarella), and green (basil).**

Why & What – Method of Preparation

- **Tomatoes:**

- **Not always fresh, more often than not canned due to the rising popularity in canned foods at this point in time.**
- **Cheap due to the stigma that it was poisonous (i.e. the more fortunate didn't use it often and thus it costed less).**

- **Mozzarella Cheese:**

- **Real mozzarella was always used, softer and whiter in comparison to today's processed "block" cheese.**

- **Basil:**

- **Whole basil leaves opposed to the bulk made flaked basil that is more common today.**

- **Pizza Dough:**

- **Made with simple ingredients: salt, flour, yeast.**
- **Finished product was easy to cut to any size thus meeting any spending needs.**

How is Traditional Pizza Prepared?

(Specifically, how is the pizza margherita prepared?)

- **First, you stir yeast into warm water until it dissolves. Then you add the pastry flour and salt and stir well. After that you add the all-purpose flour one cup at a time, kneading it until the dough is smooth. You then shape the dough into a ball, put it in a bowl and cover it, and let it rise for 4 hours. Once it has risen, punch it down and divide into pieces. Then pinch the dough into a small circle on a pizza peel or pan.**



How is Traditional Pizza Prepared?

- **Next, add a small amount of chopped tomatoes and chunks of mozzarella and sprinkle a little bit of salt and add basil leaves. You then swirl about a tablespoon of olive oil on top of the pizza and put it into a very hot oven (500 degrees Fahrenheit). The pizza is then baked for 10-15 minutes (until golden brown).**



Authenticity of Our Ingredients:

- **For the dough, the authentic recipe in “*Pizza a Global History*”, calls for “ $\frac{1}{2}$ a fresh yeast cake”, we are instead using dried yeast. From my readings, I have determined that the dried yeast has similar to that of fresh yeast, and for our purposes, the dried yeast is more readily available as well as cost-effective.**
- **In addition, the authentic Margherita recipe called for the use of pastry flour for a more delicately textured crust. Again, out of cost and convenience, we opted out of using pastry flour and instead are using regular all-purpose flour.**

Authenticity & How was Pizza Historically Prepared?

- **Originally this pizza had to be cooked in a wood-brick oven with an oven temperature of at least 400 degrees celsius (750 degrees Fahrenheit!)**

Ingredients that they used that we can't access today were San Marzano tomatoes and water buffalo mozzarella.

- **There were several iterations of “pizza” before it became the dish we know today:**
 - **6th Century BC: Persians cooked flat-breads on their shields and covered them in cheese and dates.**
 - **3rd Century BC: Marcus Porcius Cato wrote of a dish of “flat round of dough dressed with olive oil, herbs, and honey baked on stones.”**
 - **16th Century: Tomatoes imported from Peru were believed to be poisonous until the poor of Naples added them to their pizza dough, creating a rough draft of the modern pizza.**

Fun Facts:

- **17% of the restaurants in America are pizzerias. The pizza industry grosses over \$30 billion dollars in revenue in the U.S.**
- **58% of Americans order pizza on Superbowl Sunday**
- **Gennaro Lombardi was the first person to open a pizzeria in America in 1895. The pizzeria opened in New York.**
- **The pizza referred to as Canadian Pizza is not the only canadian spin on pizza as Hawaiian pizza was actually invented in Chatham Ontario by a retired greek chef, Sam Panopoulos.**

Evolution of Pizza:



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