

## All About Pizza

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The term pizza covers a lot of territory. If you want to learn all about pizzas, then you should have a bit of a background on pizzas: specifically the history of pizza, pizza origin, pizza facts, and even pizza trivia such as who invented pizza. The subject also delves into the different types and styles of pizzas.



The varieties currently existing defy any attempts at enumeration. Thus, most people who attempt such a task stop at a broad categorization of pizza types according to certain attributes such as crust thickness, crust elasticity, crust baking and cooking procedures, toppings, etc. Aside from general, historical or trivial information, other things are of interest to the pizza lovers.

For instance, homemade pizza enthusiasts would like to know certain tips and tricks for making pizza. This includes pizza making techniques, the best pizza crust recipes, pizza toppings, homemade pizza sauce, etc. Some other interesting topics will be frozen pizza dough and where best to attain them, what are the criteria for choosing the, what are the methods for preparing them, etc.

It must be obvious that this article is a mite ambitious for wishing to tackle something entitled "all about pizza." However, an attempt is definitely warranted, so here goes.

### Some pizza facts and trivia

Accounts of pizza history always begin with the origin of pizza. This one might as well follow the same tack. We have to thank any civilization or race that baked flat bread on hot stones or stone ovens for pizza, for almost certainly, bread like the focaccia was the "mother of the pizza crust." However, the invention of the pizza is more properly attributed to the Neapolitans - the people of Naples, Italy who were baking and making pizza crust topped with tomatoes, oil, and Italian herbs, and spices. This rudimentary and traditional Italian pizza was common peasant fare in Naples. If you want an individual originator and inventor of pizzas, however, then you won't be wrong if you cite Rafaele Esposito - a native of Naples; he modified the basic Neapolitan pizza recipe and came up with three variants that added mozzarella cheese to the rudimentary Italian pizza toppings.

Now, if you are looking for some topics for small conversation, then you must remember the following trivia. One note of caution, though; you shouldn't blurt these out just to anybody or you'll sound decidedly corny and geeky. Make sure you're talking to someone interested in pizzas before you use the following trivia as conversational gambits.

- Most people in the United States love pepperoni; the least liked toppings are anchovies.
- Pizza was called (and is still called) tomato pie and pizza pie in certain parts of the States.
- The first pizzeria in the United States was opened in New York.
- The pizza industry is worth more than 30 billion dollars in the United States alone and Americans consume around three billion units of pizza every year.

- New York pizza is traditionally plain. Supposedly, New York pizza is unique because of the acidity and hardness of the water in New York. New Yorkers therefore claim that only in New York can you make real New York Pizza.

(New Yorkers must admit, however, that if water is the unique characteristic of New York pizzas, one who uses water adjusted for hardness and acidity to reflect New York water conditions, adds all the usual New York pizza ingredients and toppings, follows all the procedures strictly but makes the pizza in New Jersey can conceivably make an authentic, New York style pizza. But such an assertion, some would say, is just plain cheek.)

## Pizza types and pizza styles

The first step to a great homemade pizza is determining what type of pizza you wish to make. After all, different types of pizza have different attributes and thus call for different types of pizza base, pizza toppings and cooking techniques. Would you like to make an authentic Italian pizza, a New York style pizza, a California style pizza, or a Chicago style pizza?



**Italian pizza** is generally lean, although when you add cheese, its fat level generally rises in proportion. There are various kinds of Italian pizza, too. There are Neapolitan pizzas, of which there are two general types: the marinara and the Margherita. There are various combinations of these as well. Authentic Italian pizza, moreover, is supposedly baked on wood-fired or even coal-fired, stone ovens.

**New York pizza**, as abovementioned, is generally plain. The mainstay of New York pizza is mozzarella cheese - fresh mozzarella cheese to be precise. One can add garlic, different types of cheeses, anchovies, shrimp, etc but these are usually optional. The pizza dough recipe for traditional New York pizza, on the other hand, calls for high-gluten flour. The result is firm, usually thin, chewy pizza.

**The California style pizza** is generally known for gourmet flavors. You can say the California pizza has countless variations. The pizza crust, in this case, is light, crisp and generally well risen. The toppings can be out of this world - generally California pizza makers experiment a lot with all kinds of meat, sea food, breakfast dishes, and vegetable for the toppings.

**The Chicago style pizza**, on the other hand, is generally crusty and very filling. They are characterized by their raised edges; imagine a pre-baked apple pie crust where you can place the fillings on top. Chicago pizza is usually meaty (some variants come stuffed with cheeses and meat layers) and it is eaten with a knife and fork.

You can also start by deciding on the flavor you want. Do you want to make a cheese pizza, a vegetarian pizza or a fruit pizza? Perhaps you want to make a low fat pizza, a low carb pizza, a healthy pizza? Sourdough pizza is also another variant.

Take your pick among your many options. Once you have decided, choosing the recipe would be much easier. If you have decided on an Italian pizza, for instance, then find your Italian pizza crust recipe, your Italian pizza sauce recipe and the overall Italian pizza recipe that will give you a list of toppings and pizza preparation procedures for making an authentic Italian pizza. For an easier time of it, you can opt to use Italian-style frozen pizza dough then just follow the Italian pizza recipe that you've found.

## Some pizza making tips and techniques

Hand tossing will help you minimize the lumps in your pizza dough. However, this should be done only after sufficient pizza dough kneading. This process lets your pizza dough develop into the right kind of consistency - that which is suitable for stretching and hand tossing. Hand tossing, however, is not advisable for thick pizza crust varieties.

If you want a crisp and firm pizza that retains its structure even when the moist toppings are added, you can bake

the pizza crust before you add the toppings and the pizza sauce. However, for thin pizza crusts, baking the crust after the toppings and sauce have been added is sufficient. For uniform baking and crisping of the crust, use a pizza stone or a pizza screen.

Finally, remember that the protein content of your flour will influence the end product. High-gluten flour will lead to a crisp but chewy crust. Gluten-free flour, however, may lead to very soft dough; additives may have to be used to give the pizza dough strength.

Quick pizza crust recipes and easy homemade pizza recipes of all kinds and style are easily available online. There are tips for baking and preparing frozen pizza dough, making your own pizza dough, preparing the ingredients for the best pizza crust recipe, etc. All you need to start making your very own pizza recipe is an internet connection, a good source of basic pizza recipe, great pizza equipment, your imagination, and lots of time and resources for experimentation.

### **About The Author**

*With more than 10 years experience both working and owning pizza restaurants. When he tried to find information about making pizza at home, he noticed that the information was either non-existent or lacked the information he felt was important. He now shares his passion for making pizza with readers of [his website](#).*

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