

A

SLICE

of

Pizza is not Italian (well, not entirely),

Ancient Egyptians (c. 3000 B.C.) celebrated the birthdays of pharaohs with unleavened bread (like pita) covered with herbs.



Soldiers in Persia (c. 500 B.C.) baked thin bread on their shields and then topped the bread with cheese and dates.

Roman historian **Cato the Elder (234–149 B.C.)** wrote about eating “flat rounds of dough dressed with olive oil, herbs, and honey baked on stones.”

In 1522, Spanish explorers returned home from the New World with tomatoes. Wealthy people believed that the fruits were poisonous. Only peasants were brave (and hungry) enough to eat them.

At the same time, peasants in Naples, Italy, were making and eating flat bread almost every day, occasionally topping the bread with tomatoes. Soon, word spread that these breads were the best in all of Italy.

By 1889, Italian peasants had added herbs and cheese to their flat breads. When their queen, Margherita, visited, she wanted to taste this delicacy and summoned chef Raffaele Esposito to make it for her. (Royalty did not like to be seen eating peasant food.)



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HISTORY

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FOOD

and it wasn't invented. It evolved . . .



TOP THIS!

- The largest round pizza, made in South Africa in 1990, measured 122 feet 8 inches and contained 3,968 pounds of cheese and 1,984 pounds of tomato sauce.
- The largest rectangular pizza, made in Iowa in 2005, measured 129 by 98 feet and contained 4,000 pounds of cheese and 700 pounds of tomato sauce.

The first pizzeria in the United States,

Raffaele made three pizzas: one with pork fat, cheese, and basil; one with garlic, olive oil, and tomatoes; and one with tomatoes, cheese, and basil (red, white, and green in honor of the Italian flag). The queen's favorite was the last, so Raffaele named it Pizza Margherita.



The idea of pizza as a meal spread slowly. The first licensed pizzeria in the United States, Lombardi's, opened in the "Little Italy" section of New York City in 1905. **In the late 1940s**, when soldiers who had been in Italy during World War II returned home craving tomato pies like they had eaten in Italy, they found them at Lombardi's.

Soon, **pizzerias were everywhere**, and today, pizza is enjoyed around the world.



What's Your Pizza Personality?

ACCORDING TO RESEARCHERS . . .

kids who like . . .

are . . .

- | | |
|---|---|
| ● pineapple and other nontraditional toppings | leaders and high achievers |
| ● one meat | arguers and procrastinators |
| ● several meats | the center of attention and always look presentable |
| ● one veggie | understanding and easygoing |
| ● several veggies | honest and reliable |



Lombardi's, opened in New York City in 1905.

ANY WAY YOU SLICE IT, IT'S STILL



In North America, pepperoni is the most popular pizza topping. Here are some favorite toppings around the world:



- Australia eggs, shrimp, and pineapple
- Brazil green peas
- Costa Rica coconut
- France a mixture of bacon, onion, and fresh cream
- India pickled ginger, minced mutton, and tofu
- Japan eel, squid, and a mixture of mayonnaise, potato, and bacon
- Pakistan curry
- Russia red herring, and a mixture of sardines, tuna, mackerel, salmon, and onions

BY THE SLICE

What is your favorite pizza topping? Share your recipe at Almanac4kids.com/tellus.

