



219: Once Upon a Pizza

Description

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Pizza is the undisputed world's favourite fast food. Available in some form or the other in almost every country, more than 5 billion pizzas are sold annually. An estimated 350 slices are eaten each second in homes, restaurants, offices, schools, events and street corners.

Pizza is also one of the oldest foods in the world. It is made with a flattened disk of bread dough topped with a combination of olive oil, herbs, tomatoes or tomato sauce, mozzarella or any other cheese, and many other ingredients and served hot.

Whilst its origins are shrouded in the mists of time, the history of pizza began in antiquity when various ancient cultures produced basic flatbreads with several toppings. Whilst variations of topped flatbreads were consumed in ancient Egypt, Rome, Persia and Greece, Italians are credited as the people who invented the forerunner of today's pizza.

The modern birthplace of pizza is the city of Naples, where working class Neapolitans found quick and easy ways to feed their families. Pizza became a common dish because of its limited ingredients and handy portability. It was considered a street food for the poor. Tomatoes brought back from Peru in the early 16th century found their way into the diets of poorer people of Naples. They placed the tomatoes on their yeast dough and with the addition of cheese, oil, anchovies and garlic created the first simple pizza.

Immigrant Italians then brought these street food slices to the United States in the 1940's where their popularity spread like wildfire to the different states and ultimately the world. With different tastes of people, availability of local ingredients and many cultures into the mix, countless recipes have evolved leading to some unique local creations. The preferences also encompassed the types of crust with some opting for a thin crispy wood-fired base while others go for a deep-dish doughy pan baked pizza in an electric conveyor oven.

With pizza everyone has their own idea of what it should be like. At last count, there were some 687 varieties available. Even within our country, analyses of delivery statistics of organisations such as

Uber Eats reveal varying taste preferences of dwellers in the different cosmopolitan cities. At the end of the day the perfect pizza is the one that hits your sweet spot and leaves you satisfied, satiated and zealous to replicate and share your experience with everyone else.

South African entrepreneurs alongside their international counterparts contribute to the wide variety available today through individually owned and franchised outlets. Pizza is the third largest fast-food category in South Africa, making up 21% of the over 5,000 fast food stores in the country.

The popularity of this ubiquitous dish is attributed to the convenience of easy availability and adaptability to different methods of cooking. You can purchase a ready to bake pizza from the frozen food section of your supermarket and pop it into your oven at home at your convenience. You can also buy a frozen par baked pizza base with your own toppings such as leftovers. For the more industrious, purchasing fresh dough along with sauce and basic ingredients to roll out, assemble and bake at home is an option. And the ultimate in time saving and convenience is to use your mobile app to your food delivery service to source your favourite pizza delivered hot within an hour. If you are up to it, you could saunter down to your local convenience store and grab a slice from the pie warmer. The ultimate though is go into a pizzeria, order your favourite pizza and watch the pizzaiolo hand toss and stretch the dough and bake it for you while you sip your cappuccino.

HALAAL CERTIFICATION

SANHA is the country's leading certifier of pizza outlets and franchise brands. It has more than 27 years' experience in managing this category. We certify more pizza outlets than others with about 175 outlets under our banner. [Click here for the complete listing.](#)

With almost 90% of our auditors drawn from the Ulama fraternity, our auditor to outlet ratio rates amongst the highest in this industry sector.

We express our appreciation to the outlets for choosing **SANHA** certification, an independent, authoritative and reliable testimony to support claims that products and services offered as Halaal have met all the religious requirements. In a free market society, they could have opted for a less stringent lower cost standard, a so-called "**free**" certification option or no certification at all. Instead, they chose the option preferred by both industry and consumers, to ensure that they are providing guaranteed Halaal meals to patrons while delivering an outstanding customer experience.

ENJOY AUTHENTIC HALAAL PIZZA – ONE SLICE AT A TIME