



A SLICE OF HISTORY


The History of Pizza




While pizza has a long history, the modern birthplace of pizza is in the city of Naples. In the 1700s and 1800s Naples was a thriving waterfront city full of poor, working people looking for inexpensive food that could be consumed quickly. Pizzas, or flatbreads at the time, with various types of toppings like tomatoes, cheese, oil, anchovies and garlic, were sold by street vendors and eaten for any meal.



After Italy unified in 1861, King Umberto I and Queen Margherita visited Naples and rumor has it that they were bored of their traditional French haute cuisine and requested to try an assortment of pizzas. Queen Margherita's favorite was a pie topped with soft white cheese, red tomatoes and green basil, now known as a Margherita pizza! While the royalty's stamp of approval helped the Naples pizza craze, it wasn't until the 1940s that pizza would be well-known outside the borders.



As immigrants from Naples began traveling to the United States, so did the introduction of pizza into American cities like New York, Chicago and St. Louis. One of the first documented pizzerias in the United States was G. Lombardi's on Spring Street in Manhattan back in 1905. While the debate over who or what state serves the best pizza, there is no debate the popularity of pizza after World War II here in the U.S.



Pizza has become a staple of American cuisine, from gourmet to fast food. Two of the major fast food pizza chain restaurants, Pizza Hut and Domino's, both started prior to the pizza craze in the United States. Pizza Hut opened in 1958 in Wichita, Kansas after the Carney Brothers borrowed \$600 from their mom. The name Pizza Hut came to be because their sign only had space for 8 letters! At the same time in Ypsilanti Michigan, the Monaghan Brothers were buying a pizza store called "DomiNick's" for \$900. It's now estimated that Americans eat about 350 slices per second!

MyPlate or My Pizza?

We have spoke previously that getting a nutrient-dense diet starts one plate at a time, called MyPlate. MyPlate is $\frac{1}{2}$ your plate as fruits and vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ grains or starchy vegetables and $\frac{1}{4}$ protein. How does pizza stack up to this breakdown?



Many styles of pizza use red sauce as a base that is made from tomatoes.

Opt for vegetable toppings like onions, peppers, mushrooms, broccoli.

Or pair your favorite slice with a side of vegetables or a side salad.

The more color you can incorporate into your pizza, the more vitamins, minerals and fiber you will be providing your family!



Pizza crust can be made from many different types of flours and some even mix in some vegetables!

Opting for a whole grain crust can add extra fiber.

Grains provide your family's brain and body with energy!



Not to sound cheesy, but sometimes the best part of the pizza is the cheese. Cheese can provide protein, but you can also add other protein rich toppings like chicken or tofu for an extra protein packed slice!

Protein is important for maintaining muscle and other structures in the body like bones and hormones.