

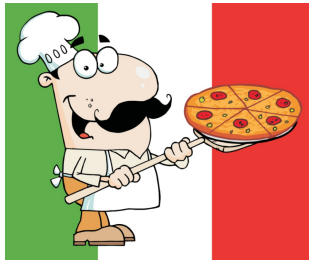


**Pizza, Pizza, Pizza. Who doesn't love pizza?  
Round, rectangular, thin, thick, stuffed--It's  
Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About that  
Italian Treat--PIZZA!**



So you think you know all you need to know about pizza? (Knowing how to eat it or order it does **NOT** count.) You probably do know a lot but it's our job to be sure you know **EVERYTHING** about it. This is the first of the "Pizza in a Nutshell" series. We'll cover where it came from, how it's made,

and more. Is your yeast, flour and pan ready? Your sauce cooked and the cheese on standby? Fire up the oven and let's get going...



In America pizza usually falls into two categories: thick and cheesy or thin and more traditional. In Italy pizza also falls into two distinct categories: Italian pizza and the rest of the world. It might seem silly considering the basic ingredients, but one taste of a true Italian pizza and that's it.

### **The Origins**

Flatbreads with toppings were eaten by the ancient Egyptians, Romans and Greeks. But the modern birthplace of pizza is in Italy's Campania region, home to the city of Naples. Founded around 600 B.C. as a Greek settlement, Naples in the 1700s and early 1800s was a thriving waterfront city. It was notorious for its throngs of working poor, or "lazzaroni."

Bakers in Naples prepared the first dish known as a "pizza" in the 1600s. (The word "pizza" is thought to have come from the Latin word **pinsa**, meaning flatbread.) This street food was sold to the poor Neapolitans who spent much of their time outside their one-room homes. They would buy slices of pizza and eat it as they walked.

As always, it seems, the poor used what few ingredients they could get their hands on (flour and water doesn't get any cheaper or any more simple) to produce something great: early pizza dough! The dough was cooked on a hot stone and then drizzled with olive oil and sprinkled with herbs (hmm... sounds like modern focaccia to us).



The Indian Water Buffalo (ugly as they are--look at the photo to the left--yuk) turned pizza into a whole new ball game with--mozzarella di bufala! Soft and creamy, it gave pizza another dimension and even today, the use of this cheese in Italian pizza cannot be substituted. (Don't even THINK about the dried shredded stuff you get at Safeway.)

Pizza was slow to move out of Naples but migration sped it up. From the 1930s onwards, Neapolitans moved north in search of work, taking their pizza with them.



*Flatbread with oil and herbs to ....*



*...yum, one with tomatoes, cheese, basil and a crispy, chewy crust.*

So how did we jump from a stone-cooked flatbread with some oil and smashed herbs to the tasty gorgeous treat shown on the right above? You'll find out in our next installment. We hope you learned a little about pizza from this first look at its history. Installment two will soon be on its

way. Just so you can practice while you're waiting for installment #2, here's how one pizza champion in Naples makes his dough (you may want to reduce the quantity, or, it's probably easier to buy it). Watch it and [learn](#).



Until installment #2 is on the way, here's a pizza brain teaser:**How do you fix a broken pizza?** (The answer will be in the next message.)

**BUT:** If you submit an answer, even if it sounds screwy or is not exactly on the mark, you have the chance to win a \$10 gift card to Siino's for a--guess what?--pizza!

Send an email to Karen Zimmerman (bobzkarenz@att.net) with your full name (not just your email address) and your guess. (You can only win one time; after all, other people like pizza, too.) We'll draw one winner out of all the guesses submitted. Don't piddle around. **You only have until April 28, 6 pm**, to get your email to Karen.

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