

The pineapple pizza in Australia

Love it or hate it pineapple continues to be a topping for pizza. This article tracks the road to it over 110 years of pizza in Australia from the first descriptions of pizza, through recipes for it, and its commercial production.

Caveat: This article only concerns English language sources. There were recipes in Italian newspapers in Australia also.

Early Days

The earliest description of pizza in Australia I found was this in 1861:

THE NEAPOLITAN PIZZA.

"The pizza" I hear your readers exclaim; "what do you mean by the pizza"? Well, the pizza is a favourite Neapolitan delicacy, which is only made and eaten between sunset and two and three in the morning, and it must be baked in five minutes in the oven; at the very moment when it is ordered it is pulled out of the oven and served up piping hot, otherwise it is not worth a grano. The pizza baker takes a ball of dough, kneads it, and spreads it out with the palm of his hand, giving it about half the thickness of a muffin, then pours over it mozzarella, which is nothing more than rich cream, beaten almost like a cream cheese, then he adds grated cheese, herbs, and tomato, puts the cake — which, made after this fashion, is termed the pizza — just for five minutes into the oven, and serves it up as hot as possible. The cheese and the cream are, of course, all melted, and unite with the herbs and the tomato. The outside crust must, in the case of a perfect possess a certain orthodox crispness. Now, at this season of the year, there is no person, high or low, from the first Neapolitan duke to the lowest lazzaroni, with whom it is not a primary article of faith to eat pizza. The pizza cake is your only social leveller, for in the pizza shops rich and poor harmoniously congregate; they are the only places where the members of the Neapolitan aristocracy—far haughtier than those of any other part of Italy—may be seen masticating their favourite delicacy side by side with their own coachmen, and valets, and barbers. The pizza shops are about the filthiest in Naples, and whoever knows Naples will admit that that is saying a good deal. — Morning Post Correspondent at Naples.¹

In 1949 they are featured in story in the Australian Women's Weekly - The Lowbrow and the Lady, written by Gertrude Schweitzer. The Lady has been taken to a restaurant familiar to the Lowbrow

"Come watch Papa Joe make the pizza," he said. "You'll get hungry." The little old man stood behind a counter, kneading a ball of dough. Presently he began to stretch it with light, deft fingers until it was large and round and paper-thin. He brushed it with olive oil, sliced bits of hard white cheese over the surface, and poured on a thick tomato sauce.

Then he arranged anchovy fillets across the top and sprinkled freshly ground pepper and oregano over even tiling. With a long-handled, flat wooden shovel, he lifted it up and slid it into the huge oven behind him.²

So, by at least 1949 pizzas are known and have been described, but I could find no recipes.

¹ The Neapolitan Pizza, The Cotton Supply, The Argus 19 March 1861 p.5

² The low-brow and the lady, The Australian Women's Weekly, 1 October 1949 p.9

Slices of pizza at the multiculinary Australian table

In 1954 the first detailed recipe for pizza was published.

1 recipe bread dough; 2 tablespoons oil; 6. Anchovy fillets; 3 sliced.; tomatoes or ' 1 medium- can tomatoes; ½ lb. cheese – sliced thinly; ¼ teaspoon salt; 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground pepper; black olives.

Pull dough with bands until it is about ½ inch thick. Place in a dish. This quantity will fit two 12-inch dishes. Sprinkle with oil until dough is well covered. Place anchovies, tomatoes, cheese and black olives all over the dough. Add little more oil, salt and pepper and place in a hot oven temperature 400 deg. F. for about 20 minutes.

By courtesy of David Jones' Home Advisory Bureau³

Recipes from here on are mostly variations of this. Many have recipes for a yeasted dough.

NEAPOLITAN PIZZA

DOUGH

4 ozs. flour

½ teaspoon salt

¼ oz. yeast

approx. 2 tablespoons warm 'milk

1 oz. butter

1 egg

1 teaspoon sugar

FILLING

3 ozs. grated cheese

4 olives (chopped)

¼ lb tomatoes (sliced)

6 anchovies

2 teaspoons olives oil

FOR THE DOUGH: Sift flour and salt into warmed basin, cream yeast and sugar and add to milk with beaten egg. Add all liquid to flour and beat thoroughly. Cream butter and work into the paste. Cover and allow to rise about 40 minutes. Flour hands and pat out and line a tart plate (lightly floured). Sprinkle the grated cheese over the dough, add sliced tomatoes, sprinkle with chopped olives and anchovies, and lastly sprinkle over the oil. In a manually controlled stove bake on a rack, arched, on the bottom oven rung at 475 degrees, top switch 'off', bottom 'low' 20 minutes then 'off'. Cook about 30 minutes. In a thermostatically controlled stove bake near the centre of the oven at 450 degrees for 30 minutes.

NOTE:

Puff pastry can be used in place of the yeast dough.⁴

SECRET OF ITALY'S PIZZA PIE REVEALED

Australians are taking more and more to Continental cooking. One of the most popular dishes asked for in Italian-style restaurants is Pizza. This month's recipe is for a genuine home-cooked Italian pizza pie, and comes from Pino Grossi, of Carlton, Victoria.

INGREDIENTS

³ Pizza, Meals With An Italian Flavor, Catholic Weekly 28 October 1954 p.25

⁴ Cooking The Italian Way, Cooking with Electricity, Port Lincoln Times 23 July 1959 p.12

1 lb. of flour
2 oz. of yeast
6 tomatoes
8 anchovy fillets
4 oz. bel paese cheese
origan
2 table spoons of olive oil
salt

METHOD

Dissolve the yeast in a little water. Stir in flour and a pinch of salt to make a dough. Put in a warm place, covered with a cloth and leave to rise for two hours. Prepare the tomatoes, cheese and anchovies while the dough is rising. Peel the tomatoes and chop them into small pieces. Cut the cheese into thin slices. Halve the anchovies. Put the pizza dough on to a baking tin, cover it with tomatoes then arrange the anchovies on top. Sprinkle with origan. Pour a little oil over it and a little on to the baking dish. Bake in a hot oven for 20 minutes. Add the cheese and bake for another five minutes. This dish serves five people. NOTE: Fresh yeast can be obtained from many bakers and keeps for a considerable time (at least a month) in a refrigerator. The dough for pizza, like all bread mixtures, should be kept at room temperature while it is being made.⁵

Alternatives to a pizza dough base

There were recipes for alternative to using a dough base:

VITA BRITS PIZZA

Butter VITA BRITS (use one or two VITA BRITS per serve) and place them on a greased oven tray. Place thin slices of cheese on each VITA BRIT. Cover this with a little well-drained tinned tomato or peeled fresh tomato slices. Season with salt and pepper and top with another thin slice of cheese: dot with a very little butter. Bake in moderate oven about 10 minutes, or until cheese has melted and slightly browned. If desired anchovies may be added (one fillet for each serve).⁶

Cookbooks

Recipes for pizza were published in general cookery books.

Little Pizzas and Pizzas, The Australian Hostess Cookbook, Hanna Pan (ed) Nelson c1969

Little Italian Pizzas, Pizza Neapolitan, The Australian Women's Weekly Cookbook, Golden Press, 1970

Cupboard Pizza

Ingredients for 5-6 servings.

- 12 ounces puff pastry
- 2 anchovy fillets
- ½ pound grated cheese
- 1 tin tomato puree
- 12 stuffed olives
- 1/8 teaspoon white pepper
- 1. Cut pastry and roll out thinly.
- 2. Place on baking sheets and spread with tomato puree
- 3. Place strips of anchovy and stuffed olives on pastry
- 4. Dot with cheese

⁵ Secrets of Italy's Pizza Revealed, Recipes of other lands, Good Neighbour 1 February 1965 p.6

⁶ Delicious, New round the clock recipes, Australian Women's Weekly 15 October 1958 p.75

5. Cook in very hot oven for 30 minutes
6. Cut into large slices and serve.⁷

Community Cookbooks

Community Cookbooks had recipes for pizza.

This recipe is from 1969. It was also published in other community cookbooks pre-1972

Pizza Pie

Pastry:

1 level breakfast cup S. R. flour

1 large tablespoon olive oil

½ teaspoon salt

Milk to make a firm dough

Filling:

1 medium white onion

2 medium-sized tomatoes (scalded and peeled)

¼ lb. tasty cheese

Pepper and salt (use oregano or a little basil if liked)

1 strip lean bacon

Mushroom or anchovies

Rub oil into flour, add salt and then milk to make a stiff dough. Roll out paper thin and line pizza pie plate.

Scald chopped onions, drain and sprinkle over pastry. Arrange sliced onions, tomatoes, grated cheese and strips of bacon, then mushrooms or anchovies. Cook 30 minutes in 400 degree oven. Serves 6 – 8

Suggestions: Lightly brush mushrooms with oil or butter. Olives salami rounds, trace crushed garlic tasty additions.⁸

Product placements

Food companies advertised their products via pizzas.

In 1960 Coca Cola took out a two-page spread.

PIZZA ITALIANA

(Multi-topping Pizza). Make a pie base from flaky pastry or pastry mix. Cover with tomato paste, then top each quarter with (a) sliced mushrooms, (b) processed cheese, (c) sliced ripe olives, (d) anchovies.

Bake in moderately hot oven for about 30 minutes. Remember - there's nothing to beat a Coke with Pizza. In fact, the satisfying goodness of Coca-Cola has made it a favourite with any food, It's so easy to brighten a meal - just serve Coke with it. Coke is the delicious refreshment that brings out flavour.⁹

⁷ Cupboard Pizza, Cooking the Italian Way, Australasian University Press Pt. Ltd. 1072 p.21

⁸ Pizza Pie, Recipes, Pearce School, 1970

⁹ Take a Cook's Cruise with Coke!, Australian Women's Weekly 30 March 1960 p.42

Commercial pizzas

There were through the years cafes and restaurants that sold pizzas.

EXPRESSO COFFEE BAR

Wines, local and imported, with hot dishes: ravioli, pizza napoletana, salami. Italian delicacies. We specialize' in table wines, red or white. Free delivery in the City and Suburbs.¹⁰

It isn't clear if the 'free delivery' applied to the pizzas. If it did this is the earliest advertisement for home delivery like current companies like Dominos.

The earliest advertisement for dine in pizza was the Grotto Capri restaurant in 1958. take-away pizza was this in 1958.

Go to the -

GROTTO CAPRI

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|97 ANZAC PARADE, KENSINGTON |

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"ISLE"

you can enjoy the best in Italian Food

PIZZA - CASSATAS - GELATI and CAKES

Open 6 p.m. till midnight

ALL SYDNEY IS MEETING AND EATING

AT THE GROTTA CAPRI

Trade Supplied with any kind of Cakes
CONTINENTAL or AUSTRALIAN¹¹

In 1972 the Souvlaki Bar had Pizza Burgers on its menu.¹²

The first advertisement for take home pizzas was for Nello's in 1970.¹³

In 1972 Coles New World Supermarket advertised Pizza Pies.¹⁴

A precursor fruit pizza

In 1970 a recipe for Banana Pizza was published. It was the usual pizza dough base with a filling of sliced bananas in a ring around the pizza over which is put sliced banana in a ring around the edge covered with tomato paste, the rest of the ingredients on top of that, and baked.¹⁵

The Pineapple Pizza

The earliest reference I found for pineapple pizza was in 1971 at Blackwoods Pizza Bar and Restaurant was the first to offer Pineapple Pizza made with tomato, cheese and pineapple.¹⁶

¹⁰ Espresso Coffee Bar, La Courier Ausatralien 16 November 1956 p.4

¹¹ Grotto Capri, The Australian Jewish Times 22 August 1958 p.7

¹² Souvlaki Bar, Mediterranean Voice 1 May 1972 p.28

¹³ Nello's Pizza, Take-Away Foods, The Australian Jewish 8 May 1970 p.28

¹⁴ New World Supermarket, The Canberra Times 5 January 1972 p.12

¹⁵ Banana Pizza, Savory dishes, The Australian Women's Weekly 25 February 1970 p.3

¹⁶ Blackwoods Pizza Bar and Restaurant, The Coromandel Times 15 June 1971 p.4

The earliest recipe I found for using pineapple on a pizza was in an advertisement for Golden Circle Pineapple Pieces.

The easy to make weekend treat.
Add a little sunshine

Yeast Dough: ¼ oz. (1x7 oz. sachet) dry yeast, 1 ½ m1. cups plain flour, pinch salt and pepper to taste, pinch sugar, pinch oregano, 1 egg beaten, ½ cup milk, 1 oz. softened butter.

Filling: 1 x 15 oz (425g) can tomato (drained), pinch sugar, salt and pepper to taste, 4 oz (100g) ham, 1 x 15 oz (450g) can Golden Circle Pineapple Pieces, (well drained), ½ cup strips of red and green peppers, sliced olives (black or green), 8 oz (225g) grated mozzarella cheese.

Mash tomatoes, stir in sugar, salt and pepper. Spread on pizza dough, then arrange ham, pineapple, strips of red and green peppers, olives and lastly grated cheese. Bake in 375° F oven for 20 to 25 minutes.¹⁷

The pineapple pizza in 2026

In February 2025 celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay published his recipe for Pineapple Pizza. Ingredients were pineapple, prosciutto and mozzarella, and tomato sauce.¹⁸

In 2026 pineapple on a pizza with other ingredients is common. Dominos, a commercial pizza says:

The age-old pineapple on pizza controversy can now finally be put to rest, as the data showed more Australians added pineapple to their orders than removed it. Pineapple was added more than 1.1M times and removed only 650,000, suggesting Aussies are sweet on this tropical topping.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ham and Pineapple Pizza, Advertising, Australian Women's Weekly 22 September 1976 p.123

¹⁸ Gordon Ramsay Pineapple Pizza – Sweet, Savoury and Perfectly Balanced, Gordon Ramsay Eats gordonramseyeats.com

¹⁹ Domino's Newsroom, 2026. Newsroom.dominos.com.au