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Pizza Ponderings

By Susie Iventosch

October is National Pizza Month. It was first so designated in 1987 and continues to be the traditional time for celebration of one of America's most important and popular food industries.

Americans eat approximately 100 acres of pizza EACH DAY, or about 350 slices per second.

Pizza is a \$32+ BILLION per year industry.

There are approximately 61,269 pizzerias in the United States. (Source: American Business Lists, Omaha, Nebraska.)

Each man, woman and child in America eats an average of 46 slices (23 pounds) of pizza per year. (Source: Packaged Facts, New York.)

Approximately 3 BILLION pizzas are sold in the U.S. each year.

Pepperoni is America's favorite topping (36% of all pizza orders). We eat approximately 251,770,000 pounds of pepperoni per year. Other



Pepperoni, America's favorite topping popular pizza toppings are: mushrooms, extra cheese, sausage, green pepper and onions.

Gourmet toppings are gaining ground in some areas of the country such as chicken, oysters, crayfish, dandelions, sprouts, eggplant, Cajun shrimp, artichoke hearts and tuna. More recent trends include game meats such as venison, duck and Canadian bacon.

Around the world, toppings vary greatly, reflecting regional tastes and preferences. Australians enjoy shrimp and pineapple, as well as bar-

beque toppings on their pies. Costa Ricans favor coconut and in Pakistan, curry is a favorite. (Source: Numero Uno Pizzeria.)

Some of the more popular international toppings in India are pickled ginger, minced mutton and "paneer" (a form of cottage cheese) which looks quite like tofu but is obviously a dairy product. Tandoori chicken and chicken "tikka" are also increasingly popular toppings in India. (Thanks to Shiv Sharan Singh from New Delhi, India, for this contribution.)

Squid and Mayo Jaga (mayonnaise, potato and bacon) are popular toppings in Japan and green peas in Brazil. In Russia, they serve pizza covered with mockba—a combination of sardines, tuna, mackerel, salmon and onions. In France, a popular combo is called the Flambé, with bacon, onion and fresh cream. (Source: Domino's.)



Chef Maggie tops pizza while brother Jack snags a taste of cheese

Photo Doug Kohen