Food and Hospitality Investigation – Pizza

# Pizzas have evolved throughout the years in Australia. To what extent does this reflect Australia’s multiculturalism?

Australia is host to a broad range of cultural foods and traditions. Unlike other countries, there has never been food specifically traditional to westernized Australia (Symons, 2014). Rather, Australian cuisine has been widely influenced by other countries. This is due to the migration of a diverse variety of people, bringing with them their culinary traditions (MTA, 2020).

This immigration brought with it a variety of diverse range of flavours and dishes, such as pizza. In the 19th century, work and gold attracted European migrants, including those from Italy, to Australia (Manoosh, 2020). By the 1920s, pizza was a part of Australia food scene (Manoosh, 2020). However, pizza popularity only rose as late as the 1950s and 60s, when mass migrations of Europeans came to Australia following World War II (Manoosh, 2020). From there, the pizza obsession has grown and evolved.

Although pizza originated in Italy and is a classic Italian dish, it has significantly evolved from the traditional margarita, and today can be seen representing many different cultures and unique flavour combinations. Common pizza chains, such as Pizza Hut and Dominos, now have pizzas sporting Mediterranean toppings, such as olives and red onion, and Indian inspired toppings, such as spiced chicken (Pizza Hut, 2020). Many pizza establishments are making accommodations such as providing options for vegan dietary requirements, an example being the introduction of vegan cheese to common pizza flavour combinations (Khalil, 2019). This demonstrates how culture and dietary requirements influence food options available on menus.

This evolution of pizza in Australia has been significantly influenced by immigration. The 1851 Gold rush brought many Chinese immigrants to the country (Chefin, 2020) and the post war migration from Europe and the Mediterranean brought many Greeks, Turks and Lebanese, as well as Italians (Chefin, 2020), with the Italian influence helping to ingrain pizza into Australian cuisine, bringing with them traditional versions of the pizza, such as the margarita (Manoosh, 2020). Italian, Lebanese, Turkish and Greek migrants also introduced their own flavours and ingredients to Australia, such as capsicums, garlic, eggplants and zucchinis, with these ingredients gradually becoming toppings on pizzas (Chefin, 2020). Today, we can even see some Chinese adaptations of pizza, with toppings such as soy sauce and Chinese sausages (Recipe Land, 2020).

In conclusion, the evolution of pizzas throughout the years in Australia greatly reflects Australia’s multiculturalism. Many different ingredients and flavours from a variety of cultures can been seen topping modern-day pizzas in Australia, demonstrating how Australia and its cuisine have been influenced by migrants from around the world, with its food scene embracing this multiculturalism.

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