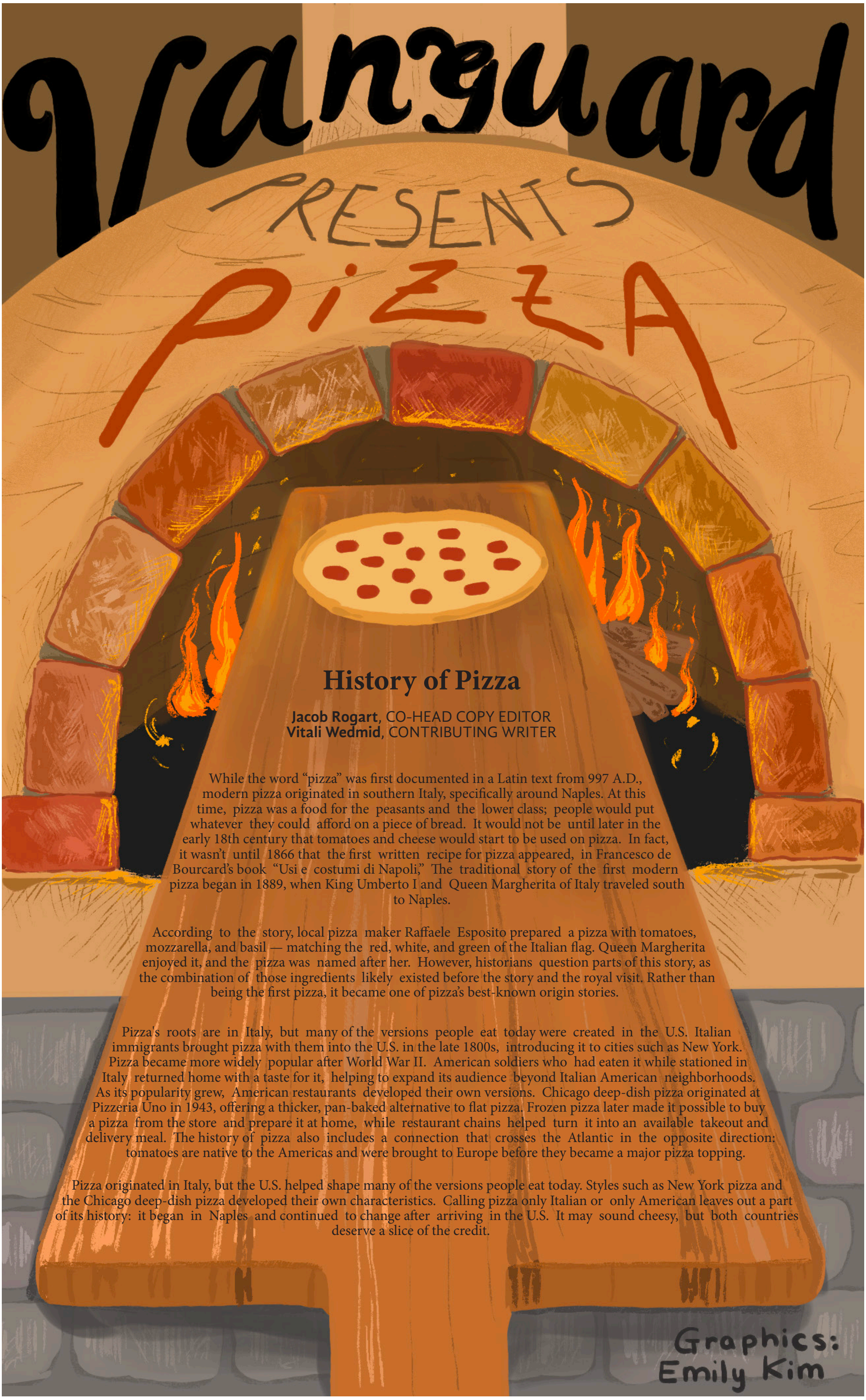


History of Pizza

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While the word "pizza" was first documented in a Latin text from 997 A.D., modern pizza originated in southern Italy, specifically around Naples. At this time, pizza was a food for the peasants and the lower class; people would put whatever they could afford on a piece of bread. It would not be until later in the early 18th century that tomatoes and cheese would start to be used on pizza. In fact, it wasn't until 1866 that the first written recipe for pizza appeared, in Francesco de Bourcard's book "Usi e costumi di Napoli," The traditional story of the first modern pizza began in 1889, when King Umberto I and Queen Margherita of Italy traveled south to Naples.

According to the story, local pizza maker Raffaele Esposito prepared a pizza with tomatoes, mozzarella, and basil — matching the red, white, and green of the Italian flag. Queen Margherita enjoyed it, and the pizza was named after her. However, historians question parts of this story, as the combination of those ingredients likely existed before the story and the royal visit. Rather than being the first pizza, it became one of pizza's best-known origin stories.

Pizza's roots are in Italy, but many of the versions people eat today were created in the U.S. Italian immigrants brought pizza with them into the U.S. in the late 1800s, introducing it to cities such as New York. Pizza became more widely popular after World War II. American soldiers who had eaten it while stationed in Italy returned home with a taste for it, helping to expand its audience beyond Italian American neighborhoods. As its popularity grew, American restaurants developed their own versions. Chicago deep-dish pizza originated at Pizzeria Uno in 1943, offering a thicker, pan-baked alternative to flat pizza. Frozen pizza later made it possible to buy a pizza from the store and prepare it at home, while restaurant chains helped turn it into an available takeout and delivery meal. The history of pizza also includes a connection that crosses the Atlantic in the opposite direction: tomatoes are native to the Americas and were brought to Europe before they became a major pizza topping.

Pizza originated in Italy, but the U.S. helped shape many of the versions people eat today. Styles such as New York pizza and the Chicago deep-dish pizza developed their own characteristics. Calling pizza only Italian or only American leaves out a part of its history: it began in Naples and continued to change after arriving in the U.S. It may sound cheesy, but both countries deserve a slice of the credit.

Graphics: Emily Kim

The Great Pizza Race

Kelly Cenci, VANGUARD ASSOCIATE EDITOR
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Conte's Pizza

"I'm gonna say usually [my favorite pizza place is] Conte's," said history teacher Chip Casto, "My favorite pizza at Conte's is onion, red pepper, [and] mushroom."

"My favorite pizza place is Conte's because I like their crispy texture [and] I like the amount of toppings [they] give you," said Lucy Wang '27, "And I like their large sized pizza, because I have a big appetite."

Pizza Den

"I like Pizza Den because it's like the cheesy, classic pizza, but it's not too cheesy that you're exploding off all the dairy stuff," said Jacob Zacks '28, "It's like the perfect amount of cheese."

"My favorite thing about working here is the people that I work with, our team is pretty good, and our pizza is pretty delicious, said an employee at Pizza Den, "I'm one of the employees here, but I help out and I manage here every so often when [the managers are] gone. I have to say the brick oven pizza places are different [than other pizza places]."

Cranbury Pizza

"My favorite pizza place is Cranbury Pizza. I usually order a Margherita slice and garlic knots, because the garlic knots are insane. The pizza's really cheap, but it's really, really good. The people who work there are all really, really sweet. It's a really positive environment to be in, and it's really close to the school, so you can go really easily," said Clare Harmon '30.

Jules Thincrust

"[My favorite pizza place is] Jules, because even though it is thin crust and it gets hate for that, the flavors melt on my tongue. And it's a euphoric feeling in my stomach," said Anoushka Mukherjee '28.

"My favorite pizza place is Jules, because … [of] all their flavors. ... Yeah, I just really like it. It's really good," said Carola Luis de Torres '29.

"My favorite pizza place is Jules, because I love a good, thin, crispy pizza, and I always get the hot honey pepperoni. It's so good," said Claire Hua '27.

Nomad Pizza

"My favorite pizza place has to be Nomad Pizza, because unlike a lot of pizza places where … you have to grab your pizza and go, … Nomad has a whole setup [and a] whole experience with an atmosphere that is unbeatable, in my opinion, and the food also tastes really good, and it's just really unique," said Vivian Hodgett '29.

"I started with Nomad in 2018. [What makes Nomad Pizza different is that] we do Neapolitan pizza, but Nomad has a real emphasis on being a part of Princeton. We want to be a part of the community," said Zac Demarco, the general manager at Nomad Pizza. "We like to just be a part of the neighborhood. I think my favorite thing about Nomad Pizza is the community vibe. … You get to watch people grow up, you get to be a part of people's lives. It's a really wonderful thing."



Graphics: Emily Kim

What Lies on the Pies

Yochin Chang and **Katherine Lee**, CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Robert Loughran, PHS Orchestra Director

According to Robert Loughran, PHS orchestra director, the slightly tangy and creamy texture of artichokes perfectly complements the stringy cheese and crunchy crust on a plain pizza.

"Artichokes on pizza are great," said Loughran. "You have a pizza slice, cheese, tomato, and then [add] the texture of the artichoke? Fantastic."

Clementine Nieman, '30

While there is an ongoing debate over whether pineapple or anchovies belong on pizza, Clementine Nieman '30 prefers a more sweet and savory option. Onions have been controversial for decades, whether they are raw, fried, saucy, or cooked all the way — but she will always reach for her dad's caramelized onion pizza. "Onions! Well, caramelized onions," said Nieman.

Elisa Schemmann, '27

Elisa Schemmann '27 enjoys corn on her pizza, but her preference stems from a striking experience abroad instead. A visit to Austria revealed to her a unique blend of pizza toppings. This assortment, along with the expertise of the pizza maker, invokes a surprising medley of textures and a perfect balance between sweet and salty.

"Onions, corn, eggs and bacon," said Schemmann"[are] really good."

Oren Daw-Niv, '30

Corn is a common pizza topping internationally, but in the United States, it is often viewed with skepticism. Oren Daw-Niv '30 sides with the more global viewpoint.

"[Corn is] sweet and kind of cold and it makes it more sort of refreshing," said Daw-Niv.

The Dollar Slice

Grace Chen, **Charissa Hsu**, and **Ayla Martins**, CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

There is nothing quite like standing on the side of the street in New York eating a hot slice of crispy, oily dollar pizza on a paper plate. As one of the trademarks of American cuisine in the urban center of our country, the iconic $1 pizza slice associated with New York City was popularized after the turn of the century in 2001. Shops used a business model that functioned through a low margin and a high sales volume, making the pizza widely accessible due to its affordability. The $1 slice originated with 99 Cent Fresh Pizza, aspiring to serve the homeless population. The fast-food pizza gained more traction in 2008 as a result of the Great Recession, when it became an affordable meal for the unemployed and budget-conscious.

At the same time, 2 Bros. Pizza opened its doors and used its low prices to entice customers. Their shops were located in high foot traffic areas, and as a result of their popularity, more chains began to pop up all over NYC. Citywide competition between various vendors caused pricing wars, with some shops dropping prices as low as 75 cents in midtown. Eventually, most pizzerias came to the consensus of pricing a slice for $1, which became the standard throughout the 2010s. By then, Manhattan had about 70 pizza eateries selling $1 slices.

Even with its affordable price point and convenience, selling slices of pizza for $1 remained profitable for pizzeria owners throughout the 2010s. For consumers, the cost-effectiveness of the pizza remained high, spiking popularity, and although the profit margin was low, the price had become the primary form of marketing for these chains. However, there was one caveat to this low pricing: high inflation rates driven up by the pandemic eventually made it unsustainable. Supply-chain issues, ingredient costs, and a decrease in foot traffic made breaking even nearly impossible. As a result, most places increased their prices to $1.50 or higher. Even as inflation gradually dropped, consumer prices in New York City have still risen about 28 percent since the pandemic, which ultimately caused the $1 slice to go extinct.

Only a few isolated shops still sell slices for exactly $1, but most pizza places that advertise a $1 slice usually sell it for $1.50 to $4. Those in search of the authentic $1 slice experience can visit the 99 Cent Pizza on 246 E 14th St., which is virtually the only pizzeria in Manhattan thatb ty sells slices for exactly $1. For $ 1-style pizza, there is a website called slicemap.com that details every currently available shop that markets itself as a $1 pizzeria.

Although the $1 slice essentially no longer exists, it survives as a nostalgic symbol of NYC and of the city's accessible, grab-and-go food culture.

Pizza for Days

Eliana Genker and **Meera Krishnan**. CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

New York Style

Most people picture the New York-style slice when they think of pizza. This style of pizza is often large, with a diameter of around 16 to 20 inches, with the dough rolled out into a thin and flat circle. There are so many varieties of this style of pizza because of the wide range of toppings, including pepperoni, pineapple and ham, meat lovers, and Margherita.

Sicilian Pizza

Sicilian pizza comes from Sicily, Italy. The pizza was originally known as "sfincione," which translates to "thick sponge," describing the texture and unique shape of the slices. The dough is shaped into a rectangle and has a medium thickness, with very thick crusts that are airy and soft. The bottom of this pizza is typically fried and crispy from baking in the oiled pan.

Chicago Deep Dish

This variety of pizza originates from Chicago, and it is known for having a thick, pie-like crust. First, the cheese is placed directly on the base; then, a layer of meat patty is added. This cheese layer is put on first to prevent the pizza from burning in the long 45-minute minute baking process. Lastly, the tomato sauce is added with the meat, along with the toppings. Chicago Deep Dish usually features mushrooms, onions, and green peppers as toppings.

Roman-Style Pizza

This style of pizza is generally rectangular in shape and has a somewhat thicker base than normal pizza. It is crunchy and especially hydrated with olive oil, which gives it its signature crispiness. It originates from Rome, Italy, where people eat it as a casual, street-food, or take-away dish. Popular toppings include potato and rosemary, zucchini, or mozzarella.