

Did you know...? Curiosities about America's top ten dishes

Many of America's favourite dishes are popular all over the world.

But how many are actually American? Read the text and find it out!

1 Hot dogs

A hot dot is a **boiled** pork sausage. They are also called "wieners" or "frankfurters" because they were originally from Frankfurt (Germany) and Vienna (Austria).

The name "hot dog" comes from nineteenth century cartoons, which showed the sausages as talking dachshund dogs (= *cani bassotto*). Street vendors started to serve the sausages in a long bread bun so that people could eat them easily at basketball or football games.



2 Pizza

Pizza is a **baked** flat bread with cheese, tomato and other toppings, such as meat. Pizza first became popular in Rome and Greece, around 2,000 years ago! People didn't have plates, so they used the flat bread to hold their food. During the Second World War, many Americans soldiers in Italy tasted pizza for the first time. When they returned home, pizza became much more popular.

3 Milkshakes

The first milkshakes, made around 1885, had alcohol in them. By 1990, however, a milkshake was a drink of milk, **blended** with fruit or chocolate.

Around 30 years later, they also often contained ice cream. In the 1950s, malt shops, which served milkshakes, became very popular with teenagers.



4 Donuts

Donuts (or doughnuts) are round, sweet cakes that are **fried** and covered in sugar, chocolate, or a similar topping. Originally, donuts came from Europe and were round cakes with jam in them. An American, Hanson Crockett Gregory, made the first donuts with a hole (= *buco*) in the middle in 1847. People often buy donuts with their morning coffee, and American police officers are now famous for always eating them!

5 Pumpkin pie

Pumpkin pie is made from pumpkins, sugar and spices, baked in a pastry case. Americans traditionally eat this pie with cream or ice cream at Thanksgiving. This festival is

on the fourth Thursday in November, and started in the seventeenth century. Families come together to eat a special meal of **roast** meat with vegetables, and have pumpkin pie for dessert.



6 Coca Cola

In 1886, pharmacist John Pemberton first mixed a syrup with fizzy water, to make Coca Cola. In the first year of production, Pemberton sold around \$5 of the drink, but it cost him \$7 to make! Nowadays, you can buy Coke in over 200 countries, and every day around 2 billion people drink it.

7 'Subway' sandwiches

Sandwiches were a British invention. They are named after the 4th Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792). He asked his servants to serve him meat between two slices of bread. At first, the founders of 'Subway' called their sandwiches 'submarines', because of their long shape. Now they have more takeaway restaurants than any other fast food company.



8 Tacos

A taco is a fried tortilla (a type of corn bread) served with roast meat, salad and cheese. The recipe comes from Mexico and is thousands of years old. Nowadays, it's very popular in the Southern United States.



9 Burgers and fries

Although we often call them 'hamburgers', most burgers are actually made of **grilled** beef, not ham. The name tells us where the food came from: Hamburg in Germany! The burger normally has a round bread bun, salad and sauces like mustard or ketchup. Most people eat their burgers with French fries — **sliced** fried potatoes. The most popular burger is the McDonald's Big Mac. Around 50 billion burgers are eaten in the USA every year.

10 Chocolate chip cookies

These biscuits are a true American invention. In 1930, a restaurant owner (= *proprietaria*) called Ruth Wakefield created them by accident while making cookies. She added chocolate chips, and expected them to **melt** during cooking, to make a brown cookie. When the chips stayed solid, a great American favourite was born.



1. Read the text and answer the following questions.

- Which foods are actually American?
- Where do the other foods originally come from?
- Which food was named after a cartoon? Why?
- Which are the 3 oldest foods? When did they first appear?
- Which food do people eat on a particular date? What's the name of the special occasion? When is it celebrated?
- Which food became more popular because of a war? Which war was that?
- Which food was created by accident? What happened?
- Which food do Americans eat at sports events?
- Which drink originally contained alcohol?

2. Match the cookery verbs below to their definitions

(you can find them in the text, too).

bake blend boil fry grill melt roast slice

- : cook in a lot of hot oil
- : mix together
- : cut thinly
- : cook over or under a hot temperature
- : cook in an oven (=forno) with a little oil
- : cook in an oven
- : cook in water
- : become soft or liquid when hot

- ### 3. Write a presentation about 3 foods (you can include a drink) from a country of your choice. What are their ingredients? How do you cook them? Are there any curiosities about those dishes? Minimum 100 words. You can make a Power Point, a poster or a Word document. Include photos.