



ARTS & CULTURE

Italians Debate Which Pizza Is Best

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In Naples, Italy, a debate has begun about the city's famous traditional food, pizza.

Billionaire Flavio Briatore criticized the low-cost, simple pizzas of Naples. He called them "bricks of dough with a puddle of tomato."

The kind of pizza that Briatore was criticizing is called the Neapolitan Margherita. It is a simple pizza, made of only dough, tomato sauce, cheese, and basil.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) aims to protect cultural arts, including cooking. UNESCO considers Neapolitan pizza making, or "Pizzaiuolo," an "intangible cultural heritage" of Italy. That means making pizza is a skill or idea passed from generation to generation and important to Naples, Italy and the world.

Many chefs from Naples reacted to Briatore's comment with anger. Chef Sergio Miccu, president of the Neapolitan pizza maker association, said Briatore had betrayed the pizza's heritage. "Pizza has fed entire generations, overcoming...war and cholera," he said.

Gino Sorbillo, one of Italy's most famous pizza chefs, also reacted publicly to Briatore's comments. He served free pizza in front of his family restaurant in central Naples as his answer. He said low-cost pizza could also be very good.

"(Briatore) says that cheap pizza is not good? We make it like this, taste it and tell me what it's like," Sorbillo told RTL radio.

Briatore owns restaurants that serve pizza that is very different from the classic Margherita. This pizza comes with many toppings and can cost as much as \$68.

Sorbillo suggested that Briatore should let his cooks prepare food next to Neapolitan chefs in his restaurants, "to let his clients, used to gourmet pizza, taste a typical Neapolitan one, in a healthy challenge."

I'm Matthew Caputo.

Giulia Segreti reported this story for Reuters. Matthew Caputo adapted it for VOA Learning English.

Words in This Story

dough – *n.* a mixture of flour and water that is used to make bread and similar foods

intangible – *adj.* not made of physical substance; not able to be touched; not tangible

heritage – *n.* the traditions, achievements, beliefs, etc., that are part of the history of a group or nation

chef – *n.* a professional cook who usually is in charge of a kitchen in a restaurant

betray – *v.* to hurt someone by not supporting or helping them

overcome – *v.* to successfully deal with or gain control of (something difficult)

client – *n.* a person who pays for goods or services at a shop, restaurant or hotel

gourmet – *n.* a food or meal of very high quality

What do you think of pizza? Do you think it should be cheap or expensive? We want to hear from you. Write to us in the Comments Section.
