Chef fired for refusing to put pineapple on pizza

9th November 2026



An Italian chef in Brisbane, Australia, has been fired for refusing to put pineapple on pizzas, among other reasons. He went to the Fair Work Commission to fight his dismissal, but failed to get his job back. The chef stated that topping pizzas with the tropical fruit was an "insult to his culture". He claimed he was sacked from a restaurant in May after repeatedly refusing his boss's instructions to make pineapple and ham pizzas for diners. His employer contended that the refusal was one of several workplace issues. The commission rejected the chef's application because it was submitted after the deadline. The chef has since found a job at another Italian restaurant.

The question of whether pineapple belongs on pizza is a controversial one. It continues to divide public opinion. Pizza purists are aghast at the idea, but it is an established menu staple in many countries. The Hawaiian pizza was reportedly invented in Canada in 1962 after a chef used ham and pineapple as toppings. The restaurant owner expressed his opinion on it. He admitted that while the pizza was not his "absolute favourite," he would not "turn his nose up at it". Many restaurateurs insist that customers should be free to enjoy whatever ingredients and toppings they choose. Although the Hawaiian pizza is popular internationally, many Italians regard it as "culinary heresy".

Sources: nine.com.au / *theguardian.com* / *euronews.com*

Writing

Pineapple should never be used as a pizza topping. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

chef / being fired / pineapple / pizza / toppings / tropical fruit / insult / culture / job / controversial / public opinion / pizza purists / menu staples / ingredients / heresy

True / False

1) A chef in Austria refused to put pineapple on pizzas in a restaurant. T / F
2) The chef said pineapple on pizza insulted his culture. T / F
3) The chef tried to get his job back at the restaurant. T / F
4) The chef has been unemployed since getting the sack. T / F
5) Pineapple on pizza is a controversial issue in the culinary world. T / F
6) Pizza lovers are aghast at the idea of putting pineapple on pizza. T / F
7) The restaurant owner would not turn his nose up at pineapple on pizza. T / F
8) The article says many Italians think pineapple on pizza is delicious. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

1.	**fired (US)**	a.	shocked
2.	**dismissal**	b.	time limit
3.	**insult**	c.	turned down
4.	**rejected**	d.	cooking
5.	**deadline**	e.	firing
6.	**question**	f.	communicated
7.	**aghast**	g.	sacked (UK)
8.	**expressed**	h.	definite
9.	**absolute**	i.	issue
10.	**culinary**	j.	affront

Discussion – Student A

a) What do you think about what you read?

b) What controversies are there about food in your country?

c) Why is pizza so popular around the world?

d) What do you think of sweetcorn as a pizza topping?

e) Are you a purist about any kind of food?

f) What do you think of mayonnaise on French fries?

g) When was the last time you turned your nose up at food?

h) What questions would you like to ask a pizza expert?

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Phrase Match

1.	failed to	a.	heresy
2.	an insult	b.	found a job
3.	the refusal was one of several	c.	at the idea
4.	it was submitted after	d.	to his culture
5.	The chef has since	e.	toppings they choose
6.	It continues to divide	f.	the deadline
7.	Pizza purists are aghast	g.	up at it
8.	he would not turn his nose	h.	get his job back
9.	enjoy whatever ingredients and	i.	workplace issues
10.	Italians regard it as culinary	j.	public opinion

Discussion – Student B

a) What do you think of pizza?

b) What do you think of pineapple as a pizza topping?

c) Should the chef have lost his job?

d) How proud of your country's cuisine are you?

e) What things would be an insult to your country's food culture?

f) Is Italian cuisine the best in the world?

g) What is the best Italian dish?

h) What are the best pizza toppings?

Spelling

1. fight his misssdlia
2. ocaiprlt fruit
3. his boss's otcniunstsri
4. the refslua was one of several
5. rejected the chef's nppitioalac
6. it was tstubdiem after the deadline
7. a costarilrnveo one
8. Pizza purists are tshaga at the idea
9. an established menu asplet
10. ataesturrerus insist that
11. dsenrgteiin and toppings
12. culinary ryshee

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. j	4. c	5. b
6. i	7. a	8. f	9. h	10. d

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions. (Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	Where did the chef go to try to get his job back?
2.	What did the chef say putting pineapple on pizza was?
3.	How often did the chef refuse to put pineapple on pizzas?
4.	How many issues did the chef's boss have with him?
5.	Why was the chef's attempt to get his job back unsuccessful?
6.	What kind of question is the issue of putting pineapple on pizzas?
7.	How do pizza purists feel about the idea of pineapple on pizzas?
8.	What was invented in 1962?
9.	What do restaurateurs believe customers should be able to choose?
10.	What do many Italians regard pineapple on pizzas as being?

Speaking – Pizza Toppings

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Pineapple
- Anchovies
- Sweetcorn
- Grilled chicken
- Salami
- Chocolate
- Mushrooms
- Mashed potato

Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	T	4	F	5	T	6	T	7	T	8	F

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.

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