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**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
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## What Is Gourmet Popcorn?

By Beverly Kane

You are sure to want popcorn while relaxing with your home theater. Don't settle for just any kind of popcorn, why not go for the best? Gourmet popcorn is getting to be very popular these days. Not sure what gourmet popcorn is? I'll explain below.

Popcorn has been around for centuries. In fact, it might have been served on the very first Thanksgiving meal. Today there are numerous companies who produce popcorn. Many claim their product is gourmet popcorn. But what is the difference between regular popcorn and gourmet popcorn?

To start with, the soil is specially formulated which ends up producing a more chewy texture as opposed to the light and fluffy taste of regular popcorn. And according to the national cancer institute this popcorn is beneficial to the digestive system.

Gourmet popcorn can pop forty to sixty times larger than its original seed. Each seed is inspected for size and color and placed in categories. There are two main shapes of gourmet popcorn, the mushroom and the butterfly. You can tell the difference after the popcorn is popped.

The seeds are packaged in airtight containers and stored at a temperature of seventy degrees. A number of products are used to flavor the popcorn from cheese to caramel to chocolate. Labs are devoted to testing the taste and the development of new flavors.

To add to the experience of gourmet popcorn, the product is sold in carefully considered packaging which varies from holiday tins to everyday picturesque containers.

As with all products, gourmet popcorn companies are continuously looking for improvements and advancements in their field. Many have begun offer a microwave variety that cuts down the time. Nevertheless, for taste, the old fashioned method of making the popcorn with hot oil in a heavy pan cannot be beaten.

Beverly Kane is a staff writer at

## What Is Gourmet Popcorn?

<http://www.hometheatergazette.com>

and is an occasional contributor to

several other websites, including

<http://www.theshoppinggazette.com>

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## What Is So Special About Gourmet Pizza?

**By Melinda Carnes**

Pizza has been around for thousands of years. When did out of the ordinary and delicious gourmet pizza make its debut? What would the forefathers of pizza think of this culinary masterpiece?

Everyone knows that a standard pizza comes with pepperoni, cheese, ground beef, peppers, onions, anchovies and sausage. Today gourmet pizza is created with any kind of topping. They are topped with anything from broccoli to chocolate. There are gourmet pizzas for breakfast that can be topped with scrambled eggs, bacon and cheese. And, there are vegetarian gourmet pizzas that are topped with a medley of vegetables.

The gourmet pizza is relatively new and was created for the privileged. It has grown in popularity in nearly every household in the United States. Pizza parlors are popping up all across the country. A Sunday afternoon of football will be a definite hit with the gang if a gourmet pizza with all the toppings is served. A sure pleaser for chocolate lovers is a dessert pizza topped with marshmallows and chocolate.

Gourmet pizza was conceived with the belief that less is better. Only by using the finest quality ingredients and one or two toppings, can a pizza acquire the status of a gourmet pizza. Only the freshest and highest quality meats and freshest mozzarella can be used. The difference in a standard pizza and a gourmet pizza will be proven with each bite.

An ordinary consumer, with a little imagination, can create a gourmet pizza at home. A variety of pre-baked pizza shells are available in all types of food stores. With some imagination and experimentation, a home chef can make a mouth-watering work of art. Most food stores carry a line of pizza shells, cheeses and gourmet sauces. Cheeses other than Mozzarella can be used.

Gourmet pizza shops continue to grow, offering a variety of pizzas from different cultures. Every culture brings an innovative way to make the gourmet pizza. These tasty delights will bring dining pleasure for years to come.

Melinda Carnes is a staff writer at

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