

Worldwide Wieners

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Sausages are Life

Ever since I was a kid, sausages have always been there in my life. As a kid when I was younger, they primarily seemed to be breakfast food. Every weekend, my family would cook sausages to eat alongside pancakes. Pancakes and sausages were the meal I looked forward to every weekend until the point I reached high school. The amount of time it took to make the whole meal made it exclusive to the weekend, since no one in my house woke up early enough during the school week to make it. I never could have predicted the impact sausages would have on me as I started to have less time for food. I never knew sausages could be fast.

When I reached high school, I found out that sausages were the solution to needing a quick meal whenever I was hungry. Most sausages are pre-cooked and ready to eat, making them one of the best options for making a meal in such a short timeframe. Also, because I am Chinese, rice made up a lot of my meals as a kid; so naturally, a quick meal I needed to make would have to involve rice. Although rice is an important part of the meal, rice itself is bland and not too exciting to eat. This led to my family putting rice in a rice cooker along with Chinese sausages to make meals for nights we had no time to make anything else. The addition of the sausage to the rice is what makes the meal better to eat. However, rice and Chinese sausages were not the only quick meal I learned to enjoy thanks to sausages.



Here in America, we love our hot dogs. Hot dogs are something we Americans love, as seen by the multiple ways they are pushed onto us. However, in terms of getting a quick meal, my life made another turn when I was gifted with the best invention ever: the hot dog toaster. Hot dog toasters gave me another option for a quick meal when needed. I just needed a supply of buns, wieners, and a power outlet. Putting everything into the toaster and getting a fresh warm hot dog to eat in just a few minutes was as simple as it got. This method of making a quick meal was even faster, yet equally as delicious. Nothing beats the guilt of eating the healthiest food in existence. Now, how do hot dogs and sausages relate? Well, hot dogs are just buns with sausages in them, so for the purpose of this intense academic text, hot dogs will be treated the same as sausages.

Although I grew up thinking of sausages as a special meal to eat as a kid, my views soon changed as I got older. As my time for food declined, sausages are what saved my stomach. Sausages may not be the best meal in existence, but they were there for me.

Sausage Survival

The original idea of sausages was to be a survival food, an idea that is still true with them to this day. The meaning of survival may be different today than what it was back when they were first created, but they are still equally important. Whether it was to save food for the future or to have a quick meal when needed, sausages represent survival.

The process of making sausages came out of a need to have food for the future.

According to Walden Local, an online butcher service on the East coast, their website mentions that “sausages were not only a way to preserve meat but also a versatile ingredient in many hearty dishes that sustained families through the harsh winters,” (“Why the Sausage is Made”).

They mention that sausages were a way to preserve meat, especially for winter meals. When it is cold outside, getting food was a lot harder for families, and there were few ways of preserving meat to last. This is why the process of making sausages became important in preserving meat, so that families could continue to eat even during the winter. By allowing meat to last longer, sausages are a form of survival food.

Sausages have been a survival food for a long time. In fact, the word “sausage” comes from the Latin word, *salsus*, which means

preserved or salted. In 1500 BC, sausages were made and eaten by the Babylonians and ancient Chinese. Other cultures also included sausages like the Greeks with Salami in 449 BC, and pemmican which is a similar Native American food item. The sausages we are more familiar with originated in Europe, Frankfurters from Frankfurt, Germany, and bologna from Bologna, Italy. Sausages were created in Europe because the low moisture of sausages were able to preserve the meats in the warm climate of Southern Europe (Lonergan). The overall idea of sausages was to allow meat to be kept for long periods of time. As Lonergan’s article shows, this ideology of survival for sausages was similar across multiple different cultures around the world over time. Finding a way to preserve meat was important back in older days because technologies like refrigeration did not exist to help the meat to stay fresh longer. So, sausages were a good method to have food for a long period of time. However, over time, the meaning of survival has changed from what it used to mean when sausages were first created.

In a more modern-day context, sausages can be a survival food due to the ease of preparing them. Sausages will always be a quick meal to make, which is important in saving time. This shows a shift as sausages are no longer as important for preserving meat since modern technology like refrigerators allows us to keep food for longer. Instead, the faster society we live in causes an issue with time. The time saving from sausages is why they are important in today's context of survival, "Consumers today eat sausages because of (1) convenience, (2) variety, (3) economy, and (4) nutritional value. Sausage products take little time in preparation, with some sausages being ready to serve, and others needing only to be warmed before serving," (Pearson). For me personally, saving time by finding food to eat quickly is something important. Sausages do not take a long time to cook. One of my favorite pieces of cooking equipment is the hot dog toaster. The hot dog toaster, being the genius invention it is, utilizes precooked hot dog wieners and heats them up alongside a bun. This follows the updated ideology of sausages because they make a fulfilling meal in a short amount of time, therefore being the modern survival food. Following the message of quick preparation times, making the meal of Chinese sausages in a rice cooker was another quick meal with little preparation time. Sausages combine both versatility in meal options, along with survival, making them the ideal survival food fit for today's world.



How to make a quick meal:

1. Acquire a rice cooker
2. Wash some rice in the rice cooker
3. Toss in Chinese sausages (can cut if wanted)
4. Start the rice cooker
5. Wait for rice to cook

Global Sausages

Sausages are not purely a European or western tradition. Because they were a form of food created to preserve meat, there are a wide scale of sausage-making practices across the world. Many cultures all over the world have their own form of sausages.

The sausages I am more connected to is the Chinese sausages. Chinese sausages started around the years 300 to 500. The traditional method included a starch-free filling meant to preserve meat. The meat in these sausages could come from pork, livers, and even chicken. Typically, the sausages had the look of being dried up with a pinkish-reddish color (Qu). These types of sausages are found in different regions. Areas from China include the Canton region and Sichuan, but also Vietnam and Thailand have their own similar options. Back to modern times, the culture behind using these sausages, especially for immigrant families, is that they are an easy way to make a meal with little time. For me, that meal was usually tossing in the sausages with rice to cook. The article by Qu mentions that Chinese sausages are a lifeline when they do not plan meals ahead of time, demonstrating the function of Chinese sausages being able to prepare a meal on short notice.

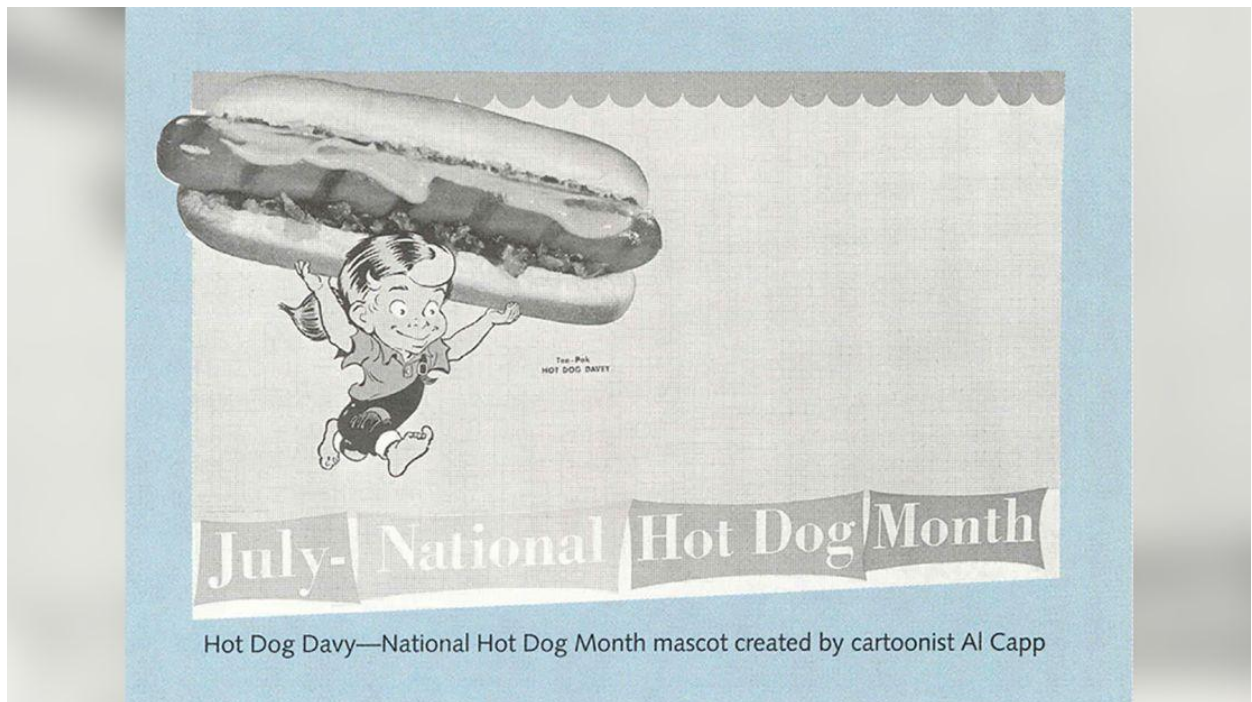
In another part of the world, the more traditional sausages that we are used to here in America were being made. The European sausages were very different from the Asian varieties. A noticeable difference is that they usually have a smoother shape and are generally not as dry. Different regions in Europe also carry their own way of making them, especially through the ingredients. The Italian sausages were usually spiced and either sweet or hot. Bratwursts from Germany were made from pork and veal, seasoned with ginger, nutmeg, coriander, or caraway. The Kielbasa from Poland is often smoked and has garlic. The sausages also have their own distinct ways of being served. The Italian Sausages were used in

pasta dishes and pizza, Bratwursts were usually grilled and served with mustard and sauerkraut, and Polish sausages were grilled, baked, or added to stews and soups (“Why the Sausage is Made”). All these sausages became prominent in the US when immigrants moved over from Europe. From my own experience at home, the bratwursts and Italian sausages were baked in an oven and served with pancakes on weekends. I never really knew about the different ways that the sausages were supposed to be served, partially because I did not care. The meaty goodness of the sausages were why I liked eating them as a kid. I never really noticed any differences in the sausages until I started liking some more than others.

Sausages are a global food because many cultures across the world have their own variant of sausage. The way sausages are used differed by the regions they came from, along with the ingredients and methods of making them. Only the concept of preserving meat in a casing stayed the same. Each region of the world created unique sausages with different tastes, utilizing different parts of the animals to preserve. In the end, sausages are a global food, which is why their migration to the US and their traditions is powerful.

AMERICA!

One of the greatest stereotypical American foods is the hot dog. I remember seeing the hot dog commercials every summer on tv, or even seeing those commercials synonymously with baseball commercials, which is another very American thing. Although hot dogs are not sausages, they



Hot Dog Davy—National Hot Dog Month mascot created by cartoonist Al Capp

have wieners, a type of sausage. As an Asian living in America, sausages and hot dogs is one of the ways that I have assimilated to American culture. Hotdogs have allowed me to understand the American spirit and enjoy screaming freedom. Their familiarity was also welcome since they include a sausage, a food artifact that I was quite familiar with. This connection also made it easier to blend the cultures together. In my family, we take inspiration from a popular Canadian hot dog stand and modify them with other ingredients like fish flakes and seaweed. If anything, hot dogs are a great way to represent different cultures through customizations; a reason that reflects America's cultural diversity and our immigrants.

Hot dogs, like modern America, are built off immigrants and their culture. The sausage mainly used in hot dogs do come from Europe. It is argued whether the sausages come from Frankfurt, Germany, or by the Viennese in Austria. However, it is largely believed that they originated from Germany, "The strongest claimant to the sausage bun

alliance was Charles Feltman, a baker from Hannover, Germany. . . Feltman served the franks on a bun, and the hot dog as we know it today was born," (Peduto). The other argument for the Germans creating hot dogs is due to immigrants, "Brought over by German immigrants in the mid-1800s, hot dogs began their path into the American zeitgeist in New York City hot dog carts, where they were a natural fit for the sandwich-loving harried New Yorker, who already preferred to eat on the go," (Selinger). These articles show how hot dogs are a creation of German immigrants because of them bringing their sausage traditions here to America. This is important because it shows the impacts of immigrant cultures here in the US, while also showing that hot dogs were created here in America with the aid of sausages and their ideals. Following the ideology of sausages, the hot dog gained popularity because it was a quick meal for workers. In fact, a few other theories attach the hot dog to needing a way to serve sausages to buyers without a dish, leading to a bun (Peduto).

Once hot dogs were an established food in America, they became powerful. Hot dogs are a powerful food because they scream America. After being introduced in New York, they quickly started becoming popular, “By the 1920s, hot dogs were a mainstream delight, deliberately marketed as patriotic, democratic fare. ‘They were Americanized through their association with public events,’ Bruce Kraig says. ‘People ate them at baseball games, horse races, fairs and circuses.’ To nosh a frankfurter at a game was to shed your ethnicity and become American, as good as anyone else. Hot dogs were a perfect fit with the pace of American life; you could eat one on the run, hold it in one hand,” (Jackson). Hot dogs are undeniably an important American tradition that we have, as shown by their widespread popularity. They are so easy to make, it is easy for every family to make them too. For example, my family would make them every summer when I was a kid.

It was hard to not feel American after getting a taste for this great American artery-clogging food. Hot dogs are so tied to American culture, that in today’s America, they are served everywhere. It is hard to miss a hot dog at big events, especially sporting events, making them an extremely patriotic tradition.

In America, our sports culture is unifying. As evident by all of the hype around the Superbowl, World Series, and NBA Finals, sports can bring everyone together in our country. Coincidentally, hot dogs are served at all these major sporting events. The unification of sports and hotdogs is a tradition that makes the sausage powerful medium to connect us all together. The way that we as Americans can all come together and spend way too much money to watch some people play a game, while eating hot dogs feels great. In fact, it does not even matter if the hot dog is of good quality or not, just go to any random high school



sporting event and you will still see people lining up for a hot dog. It all feels so patriotic. Patriotism is a great source for national pride. Many ad campaigns will take advantage of the summer tradition by advertising for hotdogs alongside July 4th or other major American events. Of all the big events, the Indy 500 displays the best of patriotism.

Starting this past year in the 2025 Indy 500, six Oscar Mayer Wienermobiles raced each other for the first time. An event so weird that it could probably only happen here in America. The start to the Wienie 500 featured a song that was sung in place of the national anthem. The lyrics of the song are, “And if I were an Oscar Mayer Wiener / Everybody would be in love with me,” (Trentlage). The song is taking advantage of the fact that Oscar Mayer makes wieners for hot dogs, which are loved by a lot of people in America. It is this shared love for hot dogs that makes them a powerful food. Since Americans love them so much, they are a symbol of American nationality and pride. Our pride for hot dogs is so powerful, we are willing to watch 6 wiener trucks race each other.

Sausages are a powerful food. If they are not allowing people to get a quick meal or survive off them, they are uniting us as a country. Patriotism is a very powerful force in this country. It just takes a look outside a residential area to find American flags flying everywhere. Sausages are a patriotic food for us. The traditions associated with them cannot get more American. The power of the sausage globally is shown by the variations present around the globe. But a good

example of the sausage’s power to unite diverse ranges of people is here in America with the hot dog.

Power for All

Admittedly, sausages might not be the most perfect food to unify everyone in a diverse country. Because sausages contain meat and often pork, they may not be a suitable choice for those Americans who do not eat meat or pork. Vegetarians may feel left out, especially since the idea of screaming “America” with hot dogs in hand rely on those sausages. However, there is also an adaptive solution to this problem through the form of vegetarian sausages. As someone who does eat meat, the concept of vegetarian sausages shockingly mirrors those of the meat sausages.

The creation of vegetarian sausages shares a similar ideology to meat sausages. During World War I, Germany was struggling due to blockades preventing a lot of food from going into the country. Some of the actions taken were to kill pigs to free up more food for human consumption. The issue however, resulted in a pig shortage for sausages. This led to Konrad Adenauer to come up with an idea for the sausage that used vegetable proteins with some meat, to trick people into eating more vegetables. This led to him adding soy flour to little bits of meat to soy flour, which when combined with other sausage ingredients, still retained a long shelf life (Heggie). Although the sausages by Adenauer were not truly vegetarian, they paved the way in creating the process in which vegetarian sausages are made. Adenauer’s sausages are also the most

recent example of how vegetarian sausages became popular. Although, Heggie's article does mention that the original vegetarian sausages were made centuries earlier in China.

As a result of Adenauer's vegetarian-ish sausages, the German food problem was partially saved. This ties back to the idea of survivability of sausages. Instead of simply being a survival food that lasts a long time, vegetarian sausages gained popularity because they became a new food to alleviate food shortages. Adenauer's sausages were originally intended to be a way to get people to eat more vegetables. By doing so, alternative sources of food were able to be enjoyed by the masses in Germany. This specific situation demonstrates how although vegetarian sausages are not the

same as meat sausages, sausages can be an adaptable survival food.

Adaptability is an additional benefit to sausages. As mentioned earlier, different areas around the world will produce different sausages. The differences between the European sausages to Asian sausages, but also even the difference within the different areas of the regions can produce sausages with different ingredients.

Sausages can be a versatile food because of the different ingredients that they can be made with, allowing them to cater to a diverse range of people who may want to eat them.

Although they may be adaptable, some variants like vegetarian sausages are not mainstream when it comes to the message of



power through patriotism. As far as I can remember, I do not think I have seen a vegetarian hot dog at any event I have been to. This may provide some limitations to the power of sausages because specific examples are for specific varieties. For hot dogs and patriotism, that turns out to be wieners and frankfurters. However, vegetarian sausages fit into the mold of power as they can still provide the same meal of hot dogs with a less mainstream audience. Maybe one day in the future, vegetarian hot dogs may become more popular at major sporting events, allowing vegetarians to join the same crazy American patriotism power trips. But until then, I guess we just must be happy that they exist.

End of the Rind

Sausages were born out of a necessity to survive. Their idea of survival was demonstrated by multiple different cultures creating them due to the necessity to have food. Whether this meant the mainstream method of preserving meat, or even tricking people to eat their vegetables, sausages started as a survival food. Even in today's context, they can provide a quick meal that allows us to fall back on if needed. Sausages are also a large component of hot dogs, a classic American food that helps bring us all together to feel patriotic. The feeling of patriotism is what makes us powerful and feel connected to each other. But in the end, those hot dogs were brought to America through immigrants bringing their sausage traditions here. Although sausages may not be a sphere, their ends are round just like the world we live in, bringing everyone around together.

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