



## Warsaw, Poland, Is Home To The Annual Pastrami Festival (+26 More Fun Facts)

Pastrami lovers across the country look forward to their favorite sandwich on January 14th as they recognize National Hot Pastrami Sandwich Day.

- A popular delicatessen meat, pastrami is usually made from beef. Others make their pastrami sandwich with pork, mutton or turkey. Before refrigeration, butchers originally created pastrami as a way to preserve meat.
- A wave of Romanian Jewish immigration introduced pastrami (pronounced pastróme), a Romanian specialty, in the second half of the 19th century.
- Early English references used the spelling “pastrama” before the modified “pastrami” spelling was used.
- New York kosher butcher, Sussman Volk earns credit for producing the first pastrami sandwich in 1887. He claimed to have gotten the recipe from a Romanian friend in exchange for storing his luggage. Due to the popularity of his sandwich, Volk converted his butcher shop into a restaurant to sell pastrami sandwiches.
- When served, the deli typically slices the pastrami and places it between two slices of rye bread.
- When pastrami and coleslaw combine, it’s called a Rachel sandwich. Similar to a Reuben which is made with corned beef and sauerkraut.
- In Los Angeles, they serve the classic pastrami sandwich with hot pastrami right out of the steamer. They slice it very thin and wet from the brine then layered on double-baked Jewish-style rye bread. It is traditionally accompanied by yellow mustard and pickles.
- In Salt Lake City, in the early 1960s, Greek immigrants introduced a hamburger topped with pastrami and a special sauce. This pastrami burger remains a staple of local burger chains in Utah.
- Turkey pastrami is made by processing turkey breast (pale pink) or thigh (dark pink) in a fashion similar to red meat pastrami, simulating the corresponding red meat deli product.
- Pastrami is a technology for preserving meat that our ancestors used before refrigerators.

- To make pastrami, you start by making corned beef.
- By smoking corned beef, you turn it into pastrami! Smoking adds flavor to the meat.
- Katz's deli is the **oldest surviving New York deli** and famous for its stuffed pastrami sandwiches.
- One of the most famous movie scenes in history featured pastrami, as Billy Crystal enjoyed a pastrami sandwich during the "I'll have what she's having" scene which was shot at Katz's Deli in New York (though she was having a turkey sandwich.) Crystal says he kept enjoying the pastrami between takes during filming
- The star of this historic deli is their Pastrami on Rye sandwich! Katz's Deli literally goes through 15,000 pounds of pastrami each week
- The Dartells in 1962 recorded a hit song called **Hot Pastrami**. It peaked at #11 on the U.S. pop charts in 1963.
- In 1963, Joey Dee and the Starlighters released a song **Hot Pastrami with Mashed Potatoes**.
- The pastrami sandwich is a central character in the recent documentary **Deli Man**.
- In New York the deli business isn't for the faint of heart. The show Food Wars dedicated an episode to **New York Pastrami Wars**.
- "There could be no picture making without pastrami," the director and pastrami fan Orson Welles once declared.
- Warsaw, Poland is home to an **annual pastrami festival** each June where pastrami is served in traditional and novel ways, like pastrami with hummus and asparagus and seasonal pastrami salad with asparagus and strawberries.
- Jewish food festivals nationwide from **Savannah to San Diego** showcase New York style pastrami.
- In a fusion of Asian and deli cuisine, the **Brooklyn Wok Shop** in Brooklyn, New York, serves pastrami dumplings.
- Similarly, popular San Francisco and New York restaurant **Mission Chinese Food** offers a Kung Pao Pastrami which is one of its most popular dishes.
- Empellon Tacqueria in New York serves Pastrami Tacos.
- Shopshin's serves pastrami reuben tater tots.
- Smoked & Stacked DC features pastrami prominently on its menu, even at breakfast. Restaurant goers can enjoy the New Yorker, a breakfast sandwich of pastrami, comte cheese, sweet and spicy pepper jelly and an egg on a soft milk-bread bun.

## **Sources:**

### **National Day Calendar**

### **Foodimentary**

### **Mobile-Cuisine**

### **Meat Poultry Nutrition**

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