

Halachos of Daily Living

What is the correct bracha for pizza?

We learned previously that pies are one form of *pas haba'ah b'kisnin*, and the *bracha* is *Mezonos*. Similarly, dough filled with jam (such as a hamantaschen) is a classic example of *pas haba'ah b'kisnin*. The *bracha* on calzones and the like, filled with cheese or meat (known as "*pashtida*" in the language of the *poskim*), is not as clear. A fruit pie is a *Mezonos* because it is a dessert item, while calzones are often intended to be the main meal and not dessert. Although the *Taz* (168:20) rules that the *bracha* on calzones is *Mezonos*, the *Shulchan Aruch* (168:17), and *Mishna Berura* (168:94) rule that the *bracha* is *Hamotzi*. However, the *Biur Halacha* states that many *Achronim* agree with the *Taz*, and if the calzone is clearly not meant as a main-meal type of food, the *bracha* is definitely *Mezonos*. Rav Belsky, *zt"l* said that it is unclear whether pizza is a snack or meal food, but noted that the general custom is to say *Mezonos* when eating a small amount. It should be noted that if the pizza dough is fully baked prior to adding the cheese (as is the case with some frozen Pizzas) the *bracha* would be *Hamotzi*. When the dough is baked alone, its status at that time is *Hamotzi*, and that does not change when a filling is added.