



Shenandoah Valley
**DISCOVERY
MUSEUM**

Open Mon.-Sat. 9-5 Sun. 1-5
Admission \$5
54 S. Loudoun St.
Winchester, VA
(540) 722-2020

www.discoverymuseum.net



Pizza Passage

Chew, chew, chew, swallow. Chew, chew, chew, swallow. We do this hundreds of times every day, and usually don't think much more about our food eat once we swallow it. So what happens to that piece of pizza after your tongue, teeth and saliva are done with it? Here's a quick imaginary tour.

Bits of crust, cheese, sauce, pepperoni, mushrooms and peppers hit the small sack that is your stomach and are immediately awash in hydrochloric acid and enzymes which kill off bacteria and germs and begin to break down the food. A valve at the bottom of your stomach sends everything in small amounts on to your small intestines which are 13' - 17' long.

Now alkaline juices go to work reducing particles into smaller molecules as well as neutralizing the acids. With some help from your gall bladder the fats in the cheese and pepperoni get broken down kind of the way that dish soap breaks down grease in your pots. These fats become fatty molecules. The pancreas contributes enzymes that break down the proteins from the pepperoni as well. The carbohydrates from the crust and veggies are reduced to simple sugars.

From here everything that's been reduced to small molecules gets sent on to the liver for further processing. As the largest organ in your body it's got the job of releasing nutrients into the bloodstream. It does about 500 different jobs. How about that for busy?

So finally what's left of your meal passes into your large intestine and 24 hours after you ate it, that 'pizza' leaves your body. There's an amazing amount of more fabulous detail than you just got in this whirlwind tour so you might want to check out a really great book called

Eating and Digestion by Angela Royston from Rigby Interactive Library. And enjoy your next pizza!

