

# wide open EATS

## Would You Eat the Golden Ticket You Found in Your Chocolate Bar?

Humans love gold. It is a sign of wealth, prestige, and class. Almost everyone has some, and the super-rich are literally dripping with it. Whether you were King Tutankamun or you are a star waltzing down the Red Carpet this month in a glinting golden gown, gold reigns supreme in the eyes of the public.

In fact, this shiny substance is such a coveted material that it has even made its way into our food. As long as it is of the purest quality (by law it has to be 23 or 24 karats to be legally considered edible), gold is biologically inert and can pass through the body without being absorbed.

Gold is tasteless, odorless, lacks nutritional components, and is worth a heck of a lot both monetarily and in social cachet. So naturally, there is no better way to flaunt your status than to place gold-plated food into your mouth as if it were a worthless element. And people have been doing that for centuries. Pizza

In medieval Italy, the craze for gold-coated feasts was causing such a frenzy of competition among the nobles that the city of Padua had to limit its use to one or two courses or else face a city-wide gold shortage.

In her book, *Food in Medieval Times*, Melitta Weiss Adamson's writes of gilded pie crusts, fowl with gold-layered heads and feet, and even animals that were so thoroughly leafed they were as much statuary as a main course. There are even 13th century accounting records for "four hundred and a half of eggs" that were covered with gold leaf and intended for consumption.

Fortunately or unfortunately, that trend hasn't changed much over the years. In fact, according to Lynn Neuberg, director of the food and beverage product line at Easy Leaf, a company that makes metallic gold leaf, there has been a significant jump in the sale of edible gold in the past year.

That's interesting, but what are people doing with all this gold leaf?

### INDUSTRY KITCHEN

Truffle loaded, gold plated, and caviar topped. This pizza rings in at \$2,000. However, if you're willing to spend that kind of dough, this pizza will be the answer to your most extravagant foodie dreams.

Even the Executive Chef Braulio Bunay himself told *Town & Country* that this dish "is the epitome of decadence."