

Podcast 147 – The Aussie Sausage

Learn English while learning about daily life in Australia,
with Rob McCormack

Podcast Number 147 – The Aussie Sausage

<https://traffic.libsyn.com/secure/slowenglish/podcast147.mp3>

(This podcast is 11 minutes and 3 seconds long.)

Hi,

One of my favourite meats for a barbeque in the park (see [Podcast 3](#) and [Podcast 4](#)), or for an evening meal at home, is the humble sausage. Of course, sausages are a favourite food in many countries around the world, so I am not claiming that the sausage is an Australian invention – it is not. However, we do eat a lot of sausages in Australia and we like to make our own style of sausage too. In Australian slang, we shorten their name to ‘snags’ or ‘snaggers’. In this podcast, I would like to tell you a little about the types of sausages we have in Australia.

Sausages are one of the cheapest meat options in Australia. For example, the basic thin barbeque sausage, made from either beef or pork, is one of the very cheapest meat products available at the supermarket. In 2023, it costs around \$6.60 per kilogram. Compare this (in 2023) to the cost of rump steak, which costs around \$30 per kilogram, which is almost 5 times more expensive. So you can see that the sausage is very cheap by comparison. I guess that is why we like to use the term ‘the humble sausage’. We mean that it is not expensive and can be eaten by people from all walks of life, including those who don’t have a lot of money. Of course, sausages are cheap for a reason. They contain meat which is the trimmings from more expensive meats such as steak – in other words the

offcuts which are not wanted on the steak.

In Australia, there are food regulations about the quality of the meat which can go into sausages. The regulations state that 50% of each sausage must be fat-free meat flesh. This ensures you get real meat in the sausage. The amount of additional fat which can then be added to the sausage cannot be more than 50% of the meat content. Again, this is designed to ensure that the fat content is not excessively high. Other additives in the sausage can include breadcrumbs and seasonings (such as salt, flavourings, herbs and spices). Cheaper varieties can also have other fillers made from wheat or rice flour. The sausage mixture is put into a casing made from animal intestine or a synthetic casing made from animal protein. There you have the completed humble sausage.

There are also many variations of this basic sausage. Firstly, you can have thick or thin sausages. I am happy with both types, although based on what I see in supermarkets, I would say the thin sausages are more popular than thick. Secondly, you can have a variety of flavours added to the sausages. These are usually sold as thick sausages and are often called 'gourmet'. Gourmet in this sense, where gourmet is an adjective, means that it has expensive or rare ingredients, or is of especially high quality. The word gourmet can also be used as a noun, and it describes people who enjoy such rare or high-quality foods.

Typical examples of gourmet sausages can be found in a butcher shop, where they specialize in making sausages which are considered high quality and which are more expensive.

THE
BUTCHER
CLUB

NOT YOUR
AVERAGE
SNAG...

ALL GLUTEN FREE

Butchers sell a variety of special sausages including (amongst others):

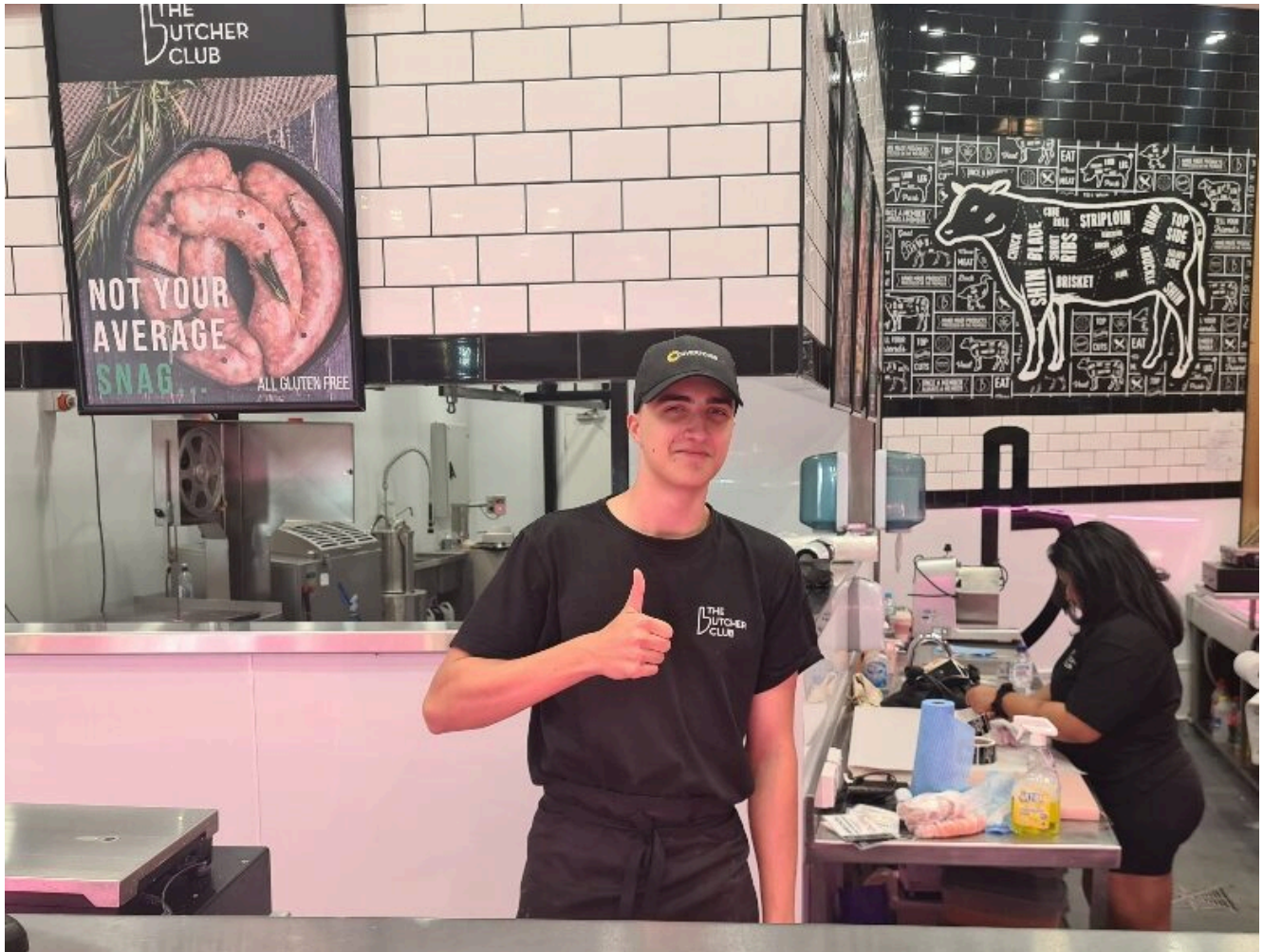
- Mild or Hot Italian sausages, which contain more spices and herbs than normal, including fennel, which is a herb with a distinctive taste.
- Pork and Maple sausages, which contain maple syrup which sweetens the taste.
- Chicken and Chive sausages, which use chicken meat and the herb chives.
- Honey Lamb and Rosemary sausages, which include lamb, Australian honey and the herb rosemary
- Bratwurst sausages – these are traditional German sausages with pork, chilli flakes, herbs and spring onions
- Spanish Chorizo sausages, which include pork, smoked paprika, chilli flakes, herbs and spring onions.

These are just a few of the special sausages which butchers make. My local butcher in our shopping centre nearby is called 'The Butcher Club'.



This shows the range of gourmet sausages which you can buy at my local butcher. They are delicious.

They have a great range of specialty sausages, including those listed above. Of course, these are not your standard basic sausage, so they cost a little more – typically around \$17 per kilogram (in 2023), but I think the taste and quality justifies the extra cost.



Arthur works at my local butcher which is called The Butcher Club. He sold us some of his excellent gourmet sausages.

Actually, in Australia the humble sausage has a special place during our state and federal elections. At many polling stations, there will be a 'sausage sizzle' set up, which means that a local community volunteer group will set up a barbeque and cook up a large number of sausages and chopped onions. It's called a sausage sizzle because the word 'sizzle' describes the sound of the sausage as it cooks on the barbeque – it sizzles! After you have voted, you can get a 'democracy sausage' in a piece of bread, with tomato sauce or mustard, for a small charge of 2 or 3 dollars. The proceeds will go to a good cause, such as the local school or a charity. It is said that the availability of a 'democracy sausage' at the polling station helps Australians to come out and vote, as voting is compulsory in Australia. (See [Democracy Sausage](#)).

I have been singing the praises of the humble sausage in this podcast. One thing I should add is that many sausages do contain quite a lot of salt. Recent research in 2018 by the Victorian government department VicHealth, The George Institute for Global Health and the Heart Foundation has found that, on average, one sausage had 28% of the body's daily recommended allowance of salt. The research also found that we eat over 1 billion snags every year in Australia, and for many people that means of a lot of salt which is not good for your health. It would make sense therefore, that you should eat sausages in moderation. Everything in moderation, including sausages, is a good approach to a healthy diet.

If you have a question or comment to make, please leave it in the comments box at the bottom of this page. Or, you can send me an email at rob@slowenglish.info. I would love to hear from you. Tell me where you live, a little bit about yourself and what you think of my Slow English podcast. I will write back to you, in English of course. If you would like to take a short quiz to see if you have understood this podcast, you will also find it on my website. Goodbye until next time.

Rob

Podcast 147 Quiz - Did you understand the podcast?

You can take the quiz as many times as you like.

Start quiz

Vocabulary

- Play additional = when there is something more, another one
- Play additives = things that have been added in

- Play adjective = a describing word in English, it describes a noun
- Play approach = (here) a way to do something
- Play barbeque = cook your meat outside on a grill
- Play basic = something which has the minimum essential things or qualities, the lowest type
- Play billion = 1000 lots of 1 million
- Play cause = (here) a good purpose which helps other people
- Play charity = an organisation which helps people in need
- Play chopped = cut into small pieces with a knife
- Play claiming = to say that something is yours or is true
- Play compare = when you decide if something is better, worse or just different to something else
- Play compulsory = when the rules or laws say that you must do something (you have no choice)
- Play content = (here) what is inside something
- Play designed = (here) made to do a certain thing, to have an effect
- Play distinctive = to be easily identified, to have special characteristics
- Play elections = when people vote for politicians
- Play ensures = makes sure that something happens
- Play excessively = in larger amount than is needed or allowed
- Play favourite = the one you like the best
- Play fillers = something put into a space to fill it.
- Play flavours = how something tastes (e.g. sweet, salty, etc)
- Play humble = something that is not important, not having any special qualities
- Play ingredients = the things which make up a food dish
- Play intestine = a tube which carries food through your body away from your stomach
- Play invention = something you create which has not been thought of by anyone else
- Play justifies = shows or proves to be right, shows the decision is correct

- Play local community volunteer group = a group of people from your area who do something good for free
- Play moderation = when you avoid doing too much of something
- Play noun = a naming word in English
- Play offcuts = small unwanted pieces cut off something
- Play options = when you have more than one thing which you can choose between
- Play polling stations = the place where you go to vote in an election
- Play proceeds = (here) the amount that is earned then given to charity
- Play rare = not found very often, hard to get, hard to find
- Play recommended allowance = the amount that experts say is right
- Play regulations = rules which must be followed
- Play singing the praises = saying good things about someone or something
- Play smoked paprika = a spice which has been treated with smoke
- Play specialize = to be an expert in doing something, to focus on doing just a few things
- Play standard = basic, something common, used by many people
- Play synthetic = man-made
- Play syrup = a thick liquid
- Play term = name
- Play traditional = something which has been done a long time
- Play trimmings = small unwanted pieces cut off the edge of something
- Play typically = when something is seen many times, average, normal
- Play varieties = types
- Play walks of life = a person's position or job in society