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Dumpling Emoji Submission

To: Unicode Consortium

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Date: January 19, 2016

Abstract

We are requesting the addition of a dumpling emoji, or more generally an emoji for “dough skin wrapped around a filling.” A dumpling glyph would fill a notable gap in the current emoji set and serve as a good “stem” emoji for related foods down the line. The formal name could be DUMPLING, with aliases that include POTSTICKER, GYOZA, JIAOZI, PIEROGI, and EMPANADA.

Introduction

Dumplings are one of the most pervasive foods in the world, culinarily native to four continents and served on all seven continents, including Antarctica.¹ As History.com

¹ “Dumplings in Antarctica.” The Antarctic Book of Cooking and Cleaning blog. February 2012. <http://www.theantarcticbookofcookingandcleaning.com/dumplings-in-antarctica.html> (Accessed November 27, 2015)

states, “Truly a universal food, you’d be hard pressed to find a cultural cuisine that doesn’t include dumplings in some form, be it stuffed or boiled.”²

In English, there are two strains of food known as “dumplings”—one being dough balls such as Italian gnocchi and others being shells stuffed with fillings, such as Japanese gyoza. This proposal focuses on stuffed dumplings because of the visual consistency needed for emoji presentation.

Dumplings seem to have independently originated in different cultures throughout Europe and Asia—a notable contrast to food emoji such as hamburgers (originating from Germany, but popularized in the United States), sushi (originating from Japan), pizza (originating from Italy), and tacos (originating from Mexico).

Poland has pierogi, Tibet and Nepal have the momo. Japan has gyoza. Italy has ravioli. Central Asian countries such as Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan have manti (also known as mantay or mantu). Azerbaijan has dushbara, Uzbekistan has [chuchvara](#), and [Tajikistan](#) has tushbera. South Korea has the mandu. Russia has pelmini, which are similar to Ukrainian varenyky. Ashkenazi Jewish culture has the kreplach, while numerous South American cultures have empanadas. Chinese culture offers wontons, soup dumplings, and potstickers, and the subcontinent of South Asia has samosas, kachori, and modak.

The fact that dumplings in Boston are known as “Peking ravioli” attests to their cross-cultural popularity.

Support

A. Compatibility

We do not know of dumpling images currently used in the major platforms (Apple, Yahoo, Google). However, the mobile Line app, which is popular in Asia, offers more than 100 dumpling stickers—including various soup dumplings, a chestnut dumpling, and a “dumpling ghost.”

² Butler, Stephanie. “Delightful, Delicious Dumplings.” Hungry History. March 28, 2014. <http://www.history.com/news/hungry-history/delightful-delicious-dumplings> (Accessed November 27, 2015)

Expected Usage

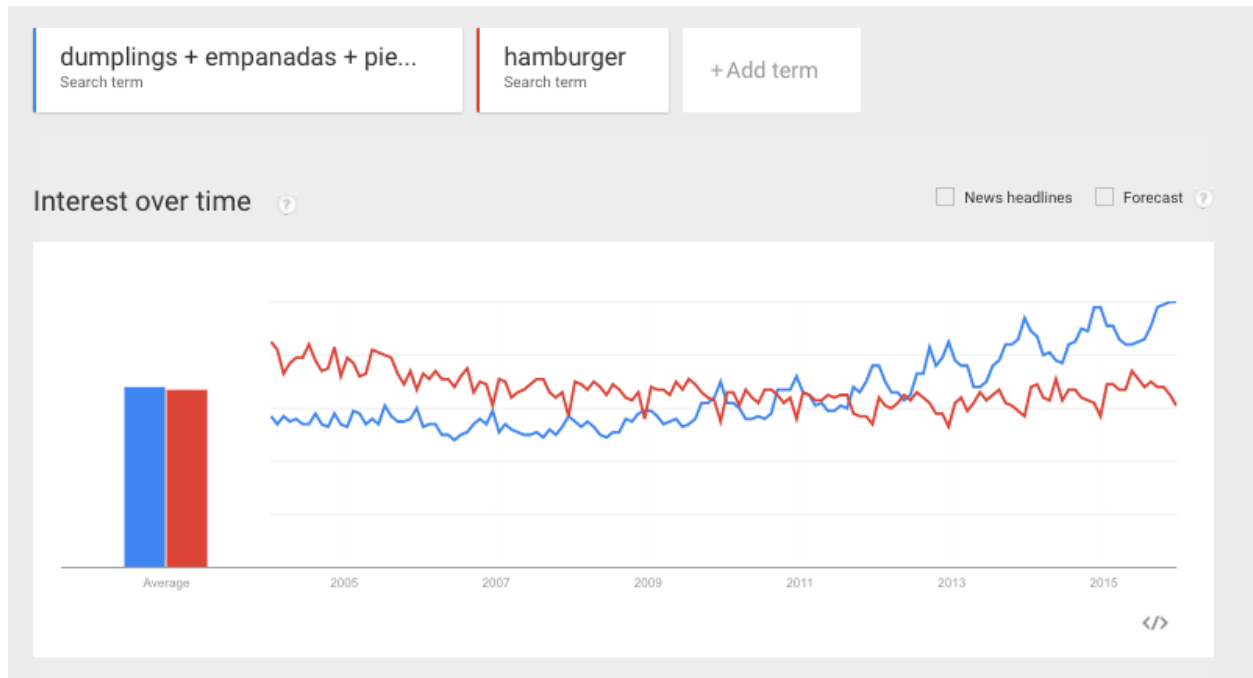
1. Frequency

The expected usage of dumpling emoji is incredibly high, in part because of the popularity of dumplings throughout the world. A good, though overly inclusive, list of dumpling-like food items can be found on Wikipedia at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_dumplings. Note that this list also includes items such as samosas, knishes, and Jamaican patties. These are topologically similar to stuffed dumplings, but have visually distinct shapes from canonical dumplings and thus would likely not be well represented by a unified dumpling glyph. However, their topological similarity makes us believe that the dumpling emoji will serve as a good “stem” emoji for when there is a customizable emoji system.

Notably, dumplings are a food native to numerous population centers of the world, including China, India, Indonesia, Russia, Japan, Latin America, and Eastern Europe.

Unlike hot dogs or sushi, which largely came from one geographic region and became globalized, dumplings originated independently in several regions around the world and then spread to North America and Australia.

A comparison of Google trends of “dumplings + empanadas + pierogi + pelmini + gyoza + mandu + momo + potstickers + jiaozi” versus the benchmark “hamburger” over time shows a comparable (and sometimes larger) demand.



2. Multiple Use

As delineated in this proposal, the dumpling glyph, if designed correctly, can be used for many similar foods, including EMPANADA, PIEROGI, and GYOZA. Future variations can be used for MOMO and PELMINI, as well as possibly SAMOSA.

Emotional Content

In many cultures, dumplings are a comfort food and a staple. They are eaten at numerous holidays and social situations, so the emotional connotation is generally positive. “Dumpling” is also used as a term of endearment in English.

4. Persistence

We believe a dumpling emoji will be persistent in large part because dumplings themselves have incredibly long historical persistence—pre-dating all members of the Unicode Consortium, as well as almost all current governments on the planet. While Chinese legends attribute the creation of the dumpling to a doctor in the Eastern Han Dynasty, the earliest extant archeological evidence of dumplings dates to 600 or 700

A.D. in Turfan, along the Silk Road, where five dumplings have been found preserved in a desiccated state.³

DESICCATED DUMPLINGS FROM TURFAN

The dry conditions at Turfan preserved many perishable items, including food. Here we see four wontons and a single dumpling, dating to the 600 or 700s. By examining the dumplings that have cracked open, archeologists have identified Chinese chives and some type of meat, most likely pork, since Xinjiang was not yet Islamified at this time. Xinjiang Museum.



C. Image distinctiveness

A dumpling emoji would be visually distinct from current emoji, though the closest in spirit is arguably the burrito (flour skin filled with stuffing). But dumplings do not generally share the burrito's elongated, tubular shape.

Notably, however, there are a variety of popular shapes for dumplings. These include a round "purse" shape (momos, soup dumplings); crescent-shaped with crimped edges (pierogi, potsticker, empanada); and "nurse cap" (wontons, manti, kreplach). One challenge in representing the concept of "dumpling" is designing glyphs which can visually reflect different types of dumplings space, without alienating too many.

³ Hansen, Valerie. *The Silk Road*. Oxford University Press. United States, October 11, 2012. Page 11.

D. Completeness

At the very least, the dumpling emoji as GYOZA would be an important addition towards completing the extensive selection of Japanese food emoji, including SUSHI, FRIED SHRIMP, CURRY AND RICE, BENTO BOX, FISH CAKE WITH SWIRL DESIGN, RICE BALL, RICE CRACKER, ODEN, DANGO, and COOKED RICE.

E. Frequency Request

The dumpling emoji has been listed on several emoji wish lists, including First We Feast's 2013 "15 Food Dumplings We Wish Existed"⁴ and amNY's 2015 "Food emoji we desperately need."⁵

In addition, even a cursory search on the Internet for the phrase "dumpling emoji" reveals a number of quotes lamenting the lack of a dumpling emoji on social media: "I need a dumpling emoji!"⁶; "*insert a dumpling emoji here*"⁷; "Where's the dumpling emoji when you need it?"⁸; " I would use the HECK out of the dumpling emoji"⁹; "OMG NO DUMPLING EMOJI FOR MY CAPTION."¹⁰

Factors for Exclusion

F. Overly Specific

A dumpling emoji would not be overly specific, and in fact veers toward general, as it can be used to represent not only Asian dumplings (Chinese potstickers, Japanese gyoza, Korean mandu), but also Latin American empanadas, as well as Eastern European pelmini, kinkhasa, and pierogi. In this way, it serves a similar function to

⁴ Schonberger, Chris. "15 Food Emoji We Wish Existed." First We Feast. March 5, 2013. <http://firstwefeast.com/laugh/15-food-emoji-we-wish-existed/s/the-soup-dumplings-emoji/> (Accessed November 28, 2015)

⁵ Kral, Georgia and Melissa Kravitz. "Food emoji we desperately need." amNY. February 24, 2015 <http://www.amny.com/eat-and-drink/new-emoji-food-emoji-we-wish-existed-1.9971278> (Accessed November 28, 2015)

⁶ https://www.instagram.com/p/9_7evzm1wy/ (Accessed November 28, 2015)

⁷ http://www.intagme.com/mleitan/917421842762779623_11450977/ (Accessed November 28, 2015)

⁸ https://twitter.com/taste_the_style/status/564949922269921280 (Accessed November 28, 2015)

⁹ <http://www.shutterbean.com/2013/i-love-lists-friday-47/> (Accessed November 28, 2015)

¹⁰ http://www.online-instagram.com/media/1065207622040746779_34819541 (Accessed November 28, 2015)

“STUFFED FLATBREAD” (for döner kabab), and “SHALLOW PAN OF FOOD” (for paella).

G. Open-Ended –

The dumpling is unique in that it is native to so many cultures across many continents, and deserves to be acknowledged as an emoji among food items.

H. Already Representable

One cannot easily create a dumpling emoji using existing emoji. The burrito is probably the most topologically similar existing emoji. One could, in theory, combine national flags with the burrito to convey “Chinese burrito” (for potstickers) or “Polish burrito” (for pierogi), but this is an inelegant workaround

The image we are submitting does not have any significance that would make it unsuitable for encoding as a character. There are no copyright, religious, or issues that reference anyone historic or living.

Other Character Properties

The other character properties are suggested to be defined as follows.

General Category: So

Canonical Combining Class: 0

Bidirectional Class: ON

Decomposition Type:

Decomposition Mapping:

Numeric Type:

Numeric Value:

Bidirectional Mirrored: N

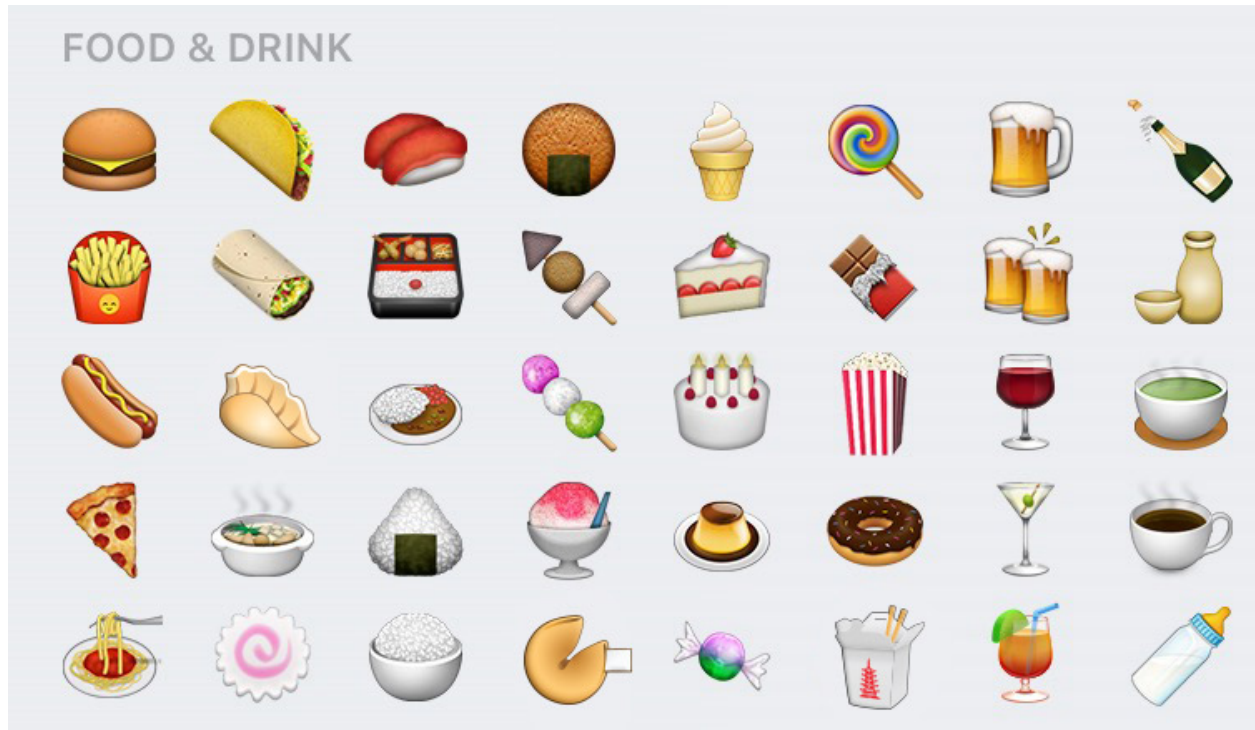
Unicode 1 Name:

ISO Comment:

Simple Uppercase Mapping:

Simple Lowercase Mapping:
Simple Titlecase Mapping:

Dumpling emoji *in situ* on Apple's emoji keyboard





Picketing Dumpling Art by Christina Gualy