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## Extreme Pizza Party

By Susie Iventosch



Maggie and Jack Keough have fun preparing pizza  
Photos Doug Kohen

"The few times we lit it, it did not throw off any heat," Mike said.

They were in a quandary, reluctant to dismantle the chimney only to leave a big hole in the roof and added costs in its wake, until Katy's cousin, a builder and draftsman, said, "You guys should just fill that thing with fire bricks and cook pizzas in it!"

This started the ball rolling. Mike began researching pizza ovens and along with the help of his contractor and neighbor Pat Geoghegan (Peralta Construction), who consulted with pizza restaurants in San Francisco's North Beach district, they eventually found the perfect oven model for the existing "fireplace" footprint. They decided upon a Forno Bravo oven through a Santa Rosa area distributor because it seemed to best fit the footprint, pricing expectations and shipping options. The cost of the unit runs approximately \$2,500 before installation.

"When the oven was shipped, it came in pieces so we could get it into the house," Katy said. "It was 'Guy Heaven' and Pat and Mike set about installing the unit. They really enjoyed the project."

Geoghegan says a pizza oven is a special application that you rarely see indoors—even in kitchens that have all the cool toys.

"You see 75 percent of these ovens in outdoor kitchens, because it's easier for the heat to escape," he noted. "The internal temperature of these ovens is upwards of 800°F and indoors it requires stainless steel triple walled lining and a special mortar due to this intense heat."

Geoghegan described the heat shield as a space-age like material that is very thin, but can withstand temperatures of 1,200°F. It wraps the oven "kind of like a blanket." The drywall on the back side of unit is actually cool to the touch, because of the efficient insulation.

"This was my favorite part of the three bathroom/kitchen remodel," Geoghegan said. "I don't know too many people who have installed an oven like this."

For those concerned about the California wood-burning stove regulations that limit particulate matter emissions, this stove emits very few particulates due to the fact it burns so hot. In addition, wood-burning stoves used for the purpose of food preparation are exempt from this regulation. For more information, please visit: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/DRDB/SAC/CURHTML/R417.PDF>.

The Keoughs received "Molina Caputo Tips 00 Pizza Flour" and recipes along with their oven accessories. They like the pizza dough recipe and have really enjoyed using this flour, but they have also used all-purpose flour.

"Though they are both great, the pizza crust made with Molina Caputo flour has a noticeably more delicate texture and it is puffier," said Katy. "We have also purchased pizza dough from Chow's in Lafayette. You can call and order ahead and that makes it easy for a big pizza party!"

It's not every day you see a traditional wood-burning pizza oven in the suburban family kitchen. And, though it did not top the list of bells and whistles Katy and Mike Keough of Moraga expected to install in their newly remodeled kitchen, they're sure glad they did!

"It's been really fun," said Katy. "Everybody gets involved in the process and the kids have fun making their own pizzas."

Mike and Katy, who both enjoy cooking, have discovered that not only can they cook pizza in the oven, but as the fire cools, the residual heat provides the perfect environment for slow-cooking beef brisket, short ribs or pot roast.

The pizza oven, heated by hard wood such as oak, heats up to 800°F in about 1.5 hours, and can cook a pizza in as little as 2-3 minutes, depending upon the thickness of the crust. The Keoughs have served pizza to a gathering as large as 40 people since getting their new pizza oven.

"We still have a lot of learning to do," Katy pointed out. "We're just getting our feet wet, but would love to learn how to make breads and croissants in this oven."

According to Mike, the house had a massive, two-sided brick fireplace between the family and living rooms that didn't really serve much purpose.

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Mugnaini Wood-fired Ovens  
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Photos Doug Kohen



The Keough's old fireplace was demolished



Building the pizza oven Photos Pat Geoghegan



Finished!

### Ingredients

By Volume

4 cups Molino Caputo Tipo 00 flour

1 ½ cups, plus 2 TBL water

2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp dry active yeast

By Weight

500gr Molino Caputo Tipo 00 flour

325gr water (65% hydration)

10gr salt

3gr active dry yeast

We highly recommend cooking by weight. It is fast, and easy to get the exact hydration (water to flour ratio) and dough ball size you want. Personally, I do not use recipes or a mixing cup when I cook dinner for the family, but pizza and bread dough is different. Being exact counts and nothing works better than a digital scale.

Mix the dough in a stand mixer, by hand or in a bread machine. If you are using a stand mixer, mix it slowly for two minutes, faster for 5 minutes, and slow again for 2 minutes.

Cover the dough and let it rise for 1 1/2 - 2 hours, or until double. Punch it down and push out the air bubbles. Form the dough into a large ball. Then cut it into 4-5 equal pieces.



Pizza dough Photo Susie Iventosch

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