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Please Your Palate Pizza

By Susie Iventosch



Homemade pizza Photo Susie Iventosch

minutes. Transfer dough to a clean, greased bowl and cover with a slightly damp kitchen towel. Let rise in warm place (not the oven) for about one hour or until doubled in size.

When dough has risen, divide into the number of pizzas you plan to make. If you want four pizzas, then make four small balls. For two larger pizzas, make two balls. If you prefer appetizer size pizzas, make eight balls. Cover dough with a towel and let rest for 10 to 15 minutes. Then dough will be ready to roll out and top.

Preheat pizza stone or heavy baking pan for 15 minutes in 450-degree oven.

Roll out dough and place on wooden or plastic cutting board, or pizza paddle. (Make sure there is a little extra flour under pizza rounds and sprinkle one tablespoon cornmeal underneath, as well. This will help to slide pizza onto baking surface.)

On top of the dough spread sauce, sprinkle grated mozzarella cheese and decorate pizza with your favorite toppings. Slide pizza with spatula onto pizza stone or baking sheet that has been greased with olive oil, or cooking spray and sprinkled with cornmeal. (We use an extra set of clean hands to help lift pizza onto baking surface.) Bake in preheated 450-degree oven 10 to 15 minutes, or until desired doneness.

Sauce

1 clove garlic, minced

1 teaspoon Italian herbs (or whatever fresh herbs you like - fresh

minced basil adds a nice touch.)

2 tablespoons red wine

1 12-ounce can tomato paste

Salt and pepper to taste

Mix all of the above. Spread over pizza dough.

Topping Ideas

Makes four small (8 inch) pizzas

Crust

1 cup warm water

(about 100-115 degrees on a thermometer, or warm to the touch)

1 package active dry yeast (or 2 1/4 teaspoons)

2 to 3 cups all purpose flour

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 teaspoon sea salt or kosher salt

Combine water and yeast in large bowl. Gently whisk to blend in yeast. Add 1 cup flour, salt and olive oil and mix well. Add enough remaining flour to make soft dough. (You may need more or less flour, so add it gradually.) Turn dough out onto a floured board or cloth and knead until dough is smooth and elastic, about five

My family likes pizza with goat cheese, pine nuts, Greek olives, red bell pepper, roasted tomatoes, marinated artichoke hearts, and fresh mozzarella. It's fun to make for company, so that everyone can add their own toppings. For these events it is good to have the old standbys such as mushrooms, black olives, pepperoni, Canadian bacon, sausage and pineapples. Here are a few other topping ideas:

Montrachet goat cheese (spread on dough before the pizza sauce)

Pesto sauce (same as above)

Fresh mozzarella cheese sliced

Grated mozzarella

Pine nuts

Sautgd sliced or chopped red onions

Roasted tomatoes (slice tomatoes, sprinkle with extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper and roast in 400 degree oven for 10 to 15 minutes.)

Kalamata Greek olives, sliced or chopped

Ripe black olives, sliced or chopped

Sundried tomatoes, julienned

Julienned red bell pepper

Marinated artichoke hearts, cut into quarters

Sliced mushrooms

Pepperoni

Canadian bacon

Pineapple chunks

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