

Margherita Pizza



Ingredients:

For the Pizza Dough:

- 2 1/4 teaspoons (1 packet) active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 3/4 cup warm water (about 110°F/43°C)
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

For the Pizza Toppings:

- 1/2 cup pizza sauce (homemade or store-bought)
- 1-2 large fresh tomatoes, thinly sliced
- 8 ounces (about 225g) fresh mozzarella cheese, sliced
- Fresh basil leaves
- Olive oil for drizzling
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Pizza Dough:

1.1. Activate Yeast:

- In a small bowl, combine active dry yeast, sugar, and warm water. Let it sit for about 5-10 minutes until the mixture becomes frothy.

1.2. Combine Ingredients:

- In a large mixing bowl, combine all-purpose flour and salt. Make a well in the center and pour in the yeast mixture and olive oil.

1.3. Knead Dough:

- Mix the ingredients until a dough forms. Transfer the dough to a floured surface and knead for about 5-7 minutes until it becomes smooth and elastic.

1.4. First Rise:

- Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, cover it with a clean kitchen towel, and let it rise in a warm place for about 1-1.5 hours or until it doubles in size.

1.5. Punch Down and Divide:

- Once risen, punch down the dough and divide it into two equal portions. You can make two individual pizzas or freeze one portion for later use.

2. Preheat Oven and Prepare Pizza:

2.1. Preheat Oven:

- Preheat your oven to the highest temperature it can go, usually around 475°F to 500°F (245°C to 260°C). If you have a pizza stone, place it in the oven during preheating.

2.2. Roll Out the Dough:

- On a floured surface, roll out one portion of the pizza dough into a thin circle or your desired shape.

2.3. Transfer to Pizza Peel or Pan:

- If using a pizza stone, transfer the rolled-out dough to a pizza peel dusted with flour or cornmeal. If you don't have a pizza stone, use a baking sheet.

3. Assemble the Margherita Pizza:

3.1. Add Sauce:

- Spread a thin layer of pizza sauce over the rolled-out dough, leaving a border around the edges for the crust.

3.2. Arrange Toppings:

- Place fresh tomato slices evenly over the sauce. Add slices of fresh mozzarella on top.

3.3. Bake:

- If using a pizza stone, carefully transfer the pizza to the preheated stone in the oven. If using a baking sheet, place the sheet in the oven.
- Bake for about 10-12 minutes or until the crust is golden and the cheese is melted and bubbly.

4. Finish and Serve:

4.1. **Add Fresh Basil:**

- Remove the pizza from the oven, and immediately sprinkle fresh basil leaves over the hot pizza.

4.2. **Drizzle with Olive Oil:**

- Drizzle the entire pizza with a bit of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

4.3. **Slice and Serve:**

- Allow the pizza to cool for a minute or two before slicing.
- Serve your homemade Margherita pizza and enjoy!

This classic Margherita pizza is a true delight with its fresh and simple flavors.