Let's Make Pizza

Curso
Aprende a Preparar **Pizzas Caseras**

Before we start with the recipe, it is important to emphasize that the main ingredient is the crust. Therefore, it is essential to pay all the attention to the dough. If we get the dough properly then the final result will make us proud.

This recipe is for a baking pan of aproximately 700 cm^2.

Ingredients:

- Flour   350 gr.
- Water   245 gr.
- Salt   8-10 gr.
- Fresh yeast   1gr. If we use dry active yeast, we will use the same amount.

Preparation:

1. Place the water in a bowl, then dissolve the yeast and start adding the flour stirring with a spoon or your hands. After you have added about 20% of the flour, add the salt and the rest of the flour. Mix everything until all the flour has been incorporated. Do not knead, just mix until all comes together. Then we cover with a kitchen towel, or a plastic bag and let rest for 30-60 minutes. This is called autolyse (actually autolyse is when we mix only water and flour, without yeast and/or salt). During the rest period, the flour will hydrate and the gluten will start forming.

2. After the rest, we place the dough on the unfloured bench and start kneading using the slap and fold method. Knead for about 10 min. Then cover the dough and let it rest for 15 min. Then knead for 2-3 min. More. You will see that the dough becomes smooth and will have more strength.
3. After folding the dough will look like an envelope. We let it rest covered (with the seam down) on the bench for 15 min.Then, we repeat the process two more times. At the end the dough should look very smooth on the surface. Also we will notice that it is now soft but with strength.

4. Next, we place the dough in a clean container, lightly coated with olive oil, to let it proof. If we allow the dough to proof at room temperature, I would suggest to wait 8-10 hours before using it. Alternatively, we can put it in the refrigerator for a retarded proof. Then, we take it out 4-6 hours before the time we plan to bake it. **This time, as well as the proofing time, will depend on the room temperature of your kitchen.** The retarded proof will slow down yeast activity,

allowing for more flavor of the dough.

5. Now, we have to stretch the dough. Flour generously the bench with corn or semolina flour, tip the container and let the dough fall under the action of gravity. Flour the surface of the dough. Keep in mind that this dough has a quite high hydration and, therefore, must be treated kindly. Using the tip of the fingers, we stretch the dough starting from the edges (this is just the opposite of what we do in a pizzeria). We should stretch the dough to reach an area smaller than the baking pan we are going to use. To place the stretched dough on the baking pan, we load it on the forearm and we placed on the baking sheet so that what was on the top goes down. Next we finish stretching the dough, trying to cover all the the surface of the baking pan. Remember to be gentle. If you feel that the dough is difficult to stretch, simply stand back and wait for a few minutes and, then, try to stretch it again.

6. Now it is time to put the toppings on our pizza. These will largely depend on personal taste. Nevertheless, it is important to keep it simple. A good pizza has to have balance. Choose high quality ingredients and don't exceed, we do not want to hide the flavor of the crust.

   Important. Preheat the oven at its maximum temperature. Usually, home ovens don't reach temperatures higher than 250 Celsius. However, each oven is different. As s general rule the higher the temperature of the oven, the better.

7. **Pizza bianca or Focaccia.** takes just olive oil, sea salt and fresh rosemary. We bake it for about 20 min. Or until it takes a golden colour.
8. **Pizza Margherita.** We cover the pizza with tomato sauce. Bake it for about 15 min. Then put the other mozzarella cheese, some olive oil and put it back into the oven for 5 more min. Take it out of the oven, finish decorating with fresh basil leaves and sprinkle with olive oil.

Enjoy it!

Buona Pizza a tutti!