

Cooking With Justin

Session: Pizza From Scratch

Overview:

Invented in the US, what is known as pizza today is enjoyed in innumerable variety throughout the countries of the world. With a built-in plate and 3 out of 4 food groups out of the gate, pizza is limited by only your imagination and culinary sense of adventure: from plain home-style to portobello mushroom with balsamic glaze. The dough is simple, but requires a little attention and a little inattention. The process is easy, but requires a little more practice than most of us are willing to try on a whim. Today that changes: we will ...

Session Plan:

- Discuss dough basics
- Reivew dough formation basics
- Mix your first batch of dough, 1 per group, refrigerate (*group activity*)
- Decide on pies to make across all groups
- Prepare specialized ingredients (*group activity*)
- Make individual pies (*group activity*)
- Cook, share, eat! (*group actvity*)

Recipes:

- Thin crust pizza dough / forming thin crust pizzas
- Thick crust pizza dough / forming thick crust pizzas
- Simple pizza sauce (alter to taste)
- Toppings overview (there's no limit!)
- Portobello Mushroom With Balsamic Glaze

Further Information:

- www.jvsquad.us -> "cooking" menu for recipes and detailed directions
- handouts will be posted on line

Thin Crust Pizza Dough

Prepared Ingredients:

- 3 cups flour (all purpose or high gluten)
- 1 1/2 tsp fine sea salt
- 1 1/2 cups warm water
- 1 scant tablespoon active dry yeast
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Directions:

- 1) Mix the salt and flour together in a 2qt bowl.
- 2) In a separate bowl, whisk the yeast into the water until the pellets disintegrate.
- 3) Whisk oil into water until it no longer foams.
- 4) Stir water mix in to dry ingredients.
- 5) Turn out dough on flour covered surface and fold until smoothed.
- 6) Form dough into a ball and place in oiled bowl. Cover tightly with plastic wrap.
- 7) Allow to rise until double (~1 hour) in volume or refrigerate overnight.

Notes:

- AP flour makes pulling the dough a little tricky, but it works.
- High gluten flour really gives the dough that chewy consistency, even in the thin areas.
- Dough freezes well for a few weeks, but separate into 2 smaller rounds before setting to rise. Add 1-2tsp oil to the bag to prevent sticking.

Further Information:

- <http://www.kingarthurflour.com/shop/items/king-arthur-sir-lancelot-unbleached-hi-gluten-flour-3-lb>
- <http://www.finecooking.com/articles/yeast-role-bread-baking.aspx>

Forming Thin Pizza Crusts

Prepared Ingredients:

- 1 batch dough for thin crust pizza
- 1/2 – 1 cup AP flour and large work surface
- 2 12-14" round or square pans, lightly oiled

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 500-550 °F.
- 2) Scrape dough out onto work surface in one piece, without folding.
- 3) Flour the dough and slice in half. Form one half into a ball, wrap, and set aside.
- 4) Form the dough into a round disc by gently pulling and pressing. When 7-8" in diameter, transfer to pan and work into shape of pan. If the dough becomes reluctant, cover and set aside for 10 minutes.
- 5) Or, once 8-9" in diameter, work into a round platter with knuckles under the crust, working in concert.
- 6) Top pizza and bake immediately (7-12 minutes), or refrigerate upto 2 hours.

Notes:

- The high heat is needed to get the crust to cook along with the toppings. Even so, some toppings (meats, thick items) may need to be par-cooked.
- The pizza is not done until the crust is done...including the underside.
- Hand-worked crusts tend to slope towards the center, so liquid will attempt to collect there...do not load center of pizza with many toppings.
- If you have a pizza "stone" and peel, flour the peel well and dress the pie on the peel. Shimmy the peel every so often to keep the dough from sticking. The heat in a pizza stone will help the underside of the crust crisp. Keep a flat spatula handy, just in case!
- According to Italian tradiiton/ lore, dough should be worked by hand because rolling toughens the dough.

Further Information:

- <http://how-to-stretch-pizza-dough.blogspot.com/>

Thick Crust Pizza Dough

Prepared Ingredients:

- 3 3/4 cups flour (all purpose or high gluten)
- 2 tsp fine sea salt
- 1 1/2 cups warm water
- 1 scant tablespoon active dry yeast
- 4 tablespoons olive oil

Directions:

- 1) Mix the salt and flour together in a 2qt bowl.
- 2) In a separate bowl, whisk the yeast into the water until the pellets disintegrate.
- 3) Whisk oil into water until it no longer foams.
- 4) Stir water mix in to dry ingredients.
- 5) Beat mixture vigorously for about 1 minute.
- 6) Cover tightly with plastic wrap, and allow to rise until double in volume (~1 hour).
- 7) If preparing in advance of use, deflate dough and refrigerate covered dough 1-2 days.

Notes:

- High gluten flour really gives the dough that chewy consistency one expects.
- Dough freezes well for a few weeks.

Further Information:

- <http://www.kingarthurfLOUR.com/shop/items/king-arthur-sir-lancelot-unbleached-hi-gluten-flour-3-lb>
- <http://www.finecooking.com/articles/yeast-role-bread-baking.aspx>

Forming Thick Pizza Crusts

Prepared Ingredients:

- 1 batch dough for thick crust pizza
- 1 12x18" pan, well oiled

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 300 °F.
- 2) Scrape dough out onto the pan in one piece, without folding.
- 3) Turn the dough over to oil the top side.
- 4) Press the dough into the pan using your palms. If the dough becomes reluctant, cover and set aside for 10 minutes.
- 5) Once pressed to the size of the pan, cover with plastic and set aside until puffed.
- 6) Top pizza and bake 10-15 minutes.

Notes:

- Do not top too heavily, as the toppings are there to complement the crust on a deep-dish pizza.
- The medium heat is needed to get the crust to cook fully through without burning. Some toppings (meats, thick items) may need to be par-cooked.
- The pizza is not done until the crust is done...including the underside.
- According to Italian lore, dough should be worked by hand because rolling toughens the dough.

Further Information:

- <http://how-to-stretch-pizza-dough.blogspot.com/>

Simple Pizza Sauce

Prepared Ingredients:

- 1 #10 can (~110 ounces) of tomato paste
- 2 quarts water
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 tablespoon garlic salt
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- 1-2 teaspoon thyme
- 1/4 cup dried onion flakes (about 1 whole onion diced finely and sweated)
- 1 cup sugar

Directions:

- 1) Put a 8-quart (or larger) pot on medium heat with the water.
- 2) Add half the tomato paste and stir until homogeneous.
- 3) Add the remainder of the tomato paste, and the oil, stir until uniform.
- 4) Add the spices and onion, stir in, then the sugar, and stir it in.
- 5) Simmer the sauce for 20-30 minutes (steaming to a little bubbling) to marry the flavors.
- 6) Freeze what you don't use within a couple days.

Notes:

- This recipe makes ~6 quarts of sauce...enough for 15 to 20 16" pies...scale it down per your needs.
- Add what amendments you like to the sauce, but they need to be small (well under 1/4") to keep the sauce spreadable.
- I cheat [all the time](#) and use plain or "old world style" spaghetti sauce!

Further Information:

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Toppings

Prepared Ingredients:

Based on a ~14" pie, try these amounts of each topping, double if only one topping (over cheese). Choose 2-4 toppings which complement each other..remember to apply judiciously...you want to taste that mushroom or pepper in each bite, not wonder if there's any sauce to go with your topping(s).

- 1 bell pepper, diced
- 1 can sliced mushrooms or 4-5 fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup 'chopped' broccoli (par boiled to taste)
- 1 large tomato, diced and drained (no sauce)
- 1-2 cloves of garlic, thinly sliced
- 1/4 to 1/2 onion, thinly sliced
- ~1/2 cup caramelized onions
- ~1/3 cup sundried tomatoes, drained and cut to 1/2" pieces
- 1 cup artichoke hearts, thinly sliced
- 4-6 strips cooked bacon, dried and chopped/crumbled
- 1/3 cup finely grated parmesian or romano cheese
- ~4 oz of small diced ham or 1/2" deli meat squares + 1 cup pineapple chunk, also diced

Directions:

- 1) Apply 4-6oz (for a ~14" pie) of sauce around the pie and spread out until thin. Add more if it appears meagre.
- 2) Add cheese, sprinkle lightly until surface appears ~50% covered...no need to over do it!
- 3) Add other toppings evenly, but not too heavily. Any larger sized chunks may burn before pie is done.
- 4) Cook per type/ directions.

Notes:

- *The better (fresh) the ingredients in, the better the pizza pie out!*
- Toppings should be less than bite-sized. Ideally less than 3/4" for easy consumption.
- Make theme pizzas! Such as:
 - Chicken Caesar: light ceasar salad dressing, diced chicken, lettuce, croutons, parm. Cheese
 - BBQ Chicken: BBQ sauce (I recommend smokey), chicken, sauteed onions (red or vialia)

Portobello Mushroom With Balsamic Glaze

Prepared Ingredients:

Glaze:

- 1/2 cup good balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh ground pepper
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

2 thin pizza crusts and:

- 8 large Portobello mushroom caps
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon parsley, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon oregano, dried

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 450 °F and space two racks even in the oven.
- 2) Combine glaze ingredients in a saucepan (non-reactive) and reduce by ~1/4, turn off heat.
- 3) Slice mushroom caps and combine with remaining ingredients, bake at 375 °F for 30 minutes. Mixture should not be watery. Allow to cool.
- 4) Spread mushroom mixture evenly across the two crusts.
- 5) Bake for ~30 minutes, checking the underside at regular intervals. Switch top and bottom pie positions after 10 minutes.
- 6) Bake pies until top is sizzling, bottom is dark golden/light brown.
- 7) Slice pizzas when cooked, reheat glaze and brush all over pies.

Notes:

- Very tasty!

Further Information:

- www.jvsquad.us -> "cooking" menu for recipes and detailed directions (some in progress)

Session Evaluation: Pizza From Scratch

Thank you for cooking with Justin today! Please take 1-2 minutes to provide some feedback so I can better tailor future sessions. Please note that a "3" is good, and all 5s is not particularly helpful.

Content:	Not at All		Decent		Absolutely
1) The session was interesting	1	2	3	4	5
2) The material was covered in enough detail	1	2	3	4	5
3) Things moved along nicely	1	2	3	4	5
4) Technique was adequately demonstrated	1	2	3	4	5
5) Justin looked like he knew what he was doing	1	2	3	4	5
6) The handouts looked good/ useful	1	2	3	4	5

Participation:	Not at All		Decent		Absolutely
1) This was worth your time	1	2	3	4	5
2) You would try another session	1	2	3	4	5
3) There was a healthy level of participation for you	1	2	3	4	5
4) You prefer hands-on to demonstration style sessions	1	2	3	4	5
5) You may try one or more recipes on your own	1	2	3	4	5

Possible Future Sessions:	Not for me		Maybe		I'll Be There
1) Wok cooking	1	2	3	4	5
2) Piroghi and dumplings: european vs asian	1	2	3	4	5
3) Simple but tasty appetizers	1	2	3	4	5
4) Sushi basics (focus on non-raw)	1	2	3	4	5
5) How about this: _____					

Comments & Suggestions:
