



THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

A FOOD BLOG

Pizza

You can substitute up to 7 ounces (about 1½ cups) of whole wheat flour for the white bread flour, but expect longer rising times and a more stubborn dough. But if you're patient during shaping, your crust will be just as light and crisp as dough made completely with white flour.

Dough:

2 tablespoons olive oil
½ teaspoon dried oregano
22 ounces (4 cups) bread flour
1¾ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon sugar
2 teaspoons instant yeast
¼ cups white wine
1½ cups water
cornmeal for dusting

Sauce:

1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained
salt and pepper

Assembly:

3 cloves garlic, unpeeled
10 ounces (2½ cups) part-skim mozzarella, shredded
2 ounces (1 cup) parmesan, grated
toppings of your choice

1. For the dough: Heat the oil and oregano in a small saucepan until fragrant. Mix in the water and wine.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, mix the flour, salt, sugar, and yeast. With the mixer on low speed, pour in the liquid mixture. Continue mixing on medium-low speed until the dough comes together, and then knead on medium-low speed for 8 minutes, until the dough is smooth and elastic. Add more flour or water as necessary to form a dough that is sticky but does not cling to the sides of the bowl. When the mixer is running on medium-low speed, the dough should not stick to the bottom of the bowl.
3. Spray a large bowl with nonstick spray. Rub your hands on the sprayed bowl to coat them with oil, then quickly form the dough into a ball. Place the ball of dough in the bowl and cover with plastic wrap.
4. Either set the dough aside to rise at room temperature, which will take 1½ to 2 hours, or refrigerate it until the next day. If it's chilled overnight, it will take about 5 hours at room temperature to warm and finish rising. You can also reduce the yeast to ½ teaspoon and let the dough rise on the counter for about 8 hours after it has been chilled overnight.

5. For the sauce: Pulse the tomatoes in a food processor 10-12 times, until they're pureed. Transfer them to a fine-mesh strainer set over a large bowl and let them drain, stirring occasionally for at least 10 minutes. (You can get away with less time if you actively stir and press the tomatoes through the strainer; if you wait longer, you can stir less.) Then discard the liquid in the bowl, transfer the tomatoes from the strainer to the now-empty bowl, and stir in a pinch of pepper and 1/8 teaspoon of salt.
6. Place a pizza stone on the bottom rack of the oven and preheat the oven to 500°C. Place the garlic on the hot pizza stone for 3-4 minutes or until fragrant.
7. Divide the dough and shape each portion into a ball. You have a few options of how to divide it. It makes enough dough for three 12-inch pizzas. However, I always cut it in half and freeze half. Then I divide the remaining dough into two more parts, one twice the size of the other. I make the larger one into pizza and the smaller into cheese bread (no sauce or toppings). Let the balls of dough relax for 10-30 minutes.
8. Using tongs, remove the garlic from the oven and let it cool for a few minutes. Mince.
9. Work with one ball of dough at a time on a lightly floured surface. Flatten the dough, then pick it up and gently stretch it out, trying to keep it as circular as possible. Curl your fingers and let the dough hang on your knuckles, moving and rotating the dough so it stretches evenly. If it tears, just piece it together. If the dough stretches too much, put it down and gently tug on the thick spots.
10. Dust a pizza peel lightly with cornmeal and transfer the round of dough to the peel. Rearrange the dough to something reasonably circular; stab it several times with a fork. Add 1/3 of each of the garlic, sauce, and cheese, followed by toppings of your preference, then transfer the pizza to a hot pizza stone. Bake for 8-10 minutes, until the cheese is bubbling and the crust is spotty brown. Let the pizza cool on the peel for about 5 minutes before slicing and serving. Repeat with the remaining ingredients.