

Taste Italia Collection

Classic Italian Pizza Recipes

VOLUME 3 £6.99

OVER
100
AUTHENTIC
DISHES



Featuring

- ❖ Recipes from the World Pizza Champion ❖ Neapolitan classics
- ❖ Favourite dishes from leading pizzerias ❖ Sweet & savoury ideas
- ❖ Calzone & pizza variations ❖ How to make delicious Italian breads



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WELCOME TO OUR PIZZA COLLECTION

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



Francesco Mazzei is head chef at top London restaurant L'Anima, and a true advocate of southern Italian cooking. Last year, he joined PizzaExpress as a guest chef and infused the menu with Calabrian delights – turn to page 26 to try some of his delicious pizza creations.



John Lanzafame currently holds the title of World Pizza Champion, and loves nothing better than to experiment with different ingredients to form interesting and unusual varieties. Turn to page 32 to discover how to make award-winning pizzas of your own.



Valentina Harris may be a descendant of the Sforza family, part of Renaissance Italy's ruling elite, but she is also the author of several cook books on Italian food. In this issue, she shares some of her favourite recipes for classic Italian pizzas with us from page 8.



Ursula Ferrigno is one of Britain's favourite Italian chefs, and she believes there are few things better than getting your family involved in a pizza-making session. Discover her favourite pizza recipes on page 46, then turn to page 113 for her fool-proof guide to making focaccia.



Mario Matassa lives in Emilia-Romagna and is a regular contributor to *Taste Italia*. This issue he illustrates his never-ending passion for pizza with four vegetarian ideas on page 57, creative pizza variations on page 94, and delicious modern focaccia on page 116.



Richard Bertinet is an award-winning French baker and owner of The Bertinet Cookery School. He can turn his hand to making breads from every cuisine, but this issue his attention is focused solely on Italy as he shows us how to bake three classic Italian loaves from page 122.



There's nothing quite like that first bite into a piece of wafer-thin dough topped with fresh tomato sauce and oozing strings of mozzarella to transport you back to memories of a special holiday spent under the Italian sun. Out of all the classic Italian dishes, pizza seems to be one of the most iconic of the country

– simple to make, yet packed with fresh flavours and truly comforting to eat. The Margherita even echoes the colours of the national flag! Pizza is especially popular with children, who jump at the chance to get involved in the cooking process, excited by the texture of the dough between their fingertips, and the chance to top it with all of their favourite ingredients.

While there are a few acceptable ready-made pizzas available to buy in the supermarkets these days, you won't be able to get a true taste of authentic Italian pizza at home unless you make it yourself. In this issue, we show you how to perfect your pizza-making skills, from making your own dough and tomato sauce, to creating toppings using every possible ingredient. There's sweet and savoury options, calzone and creative pizza variations, and even a bonus chapter on how to make Italian bread. I hope you enjoy the collection.

Sally FitzGerald *Editor*

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COVER RECIPE



Mediterranean grilled vegetable pizza

SERVES 4 🍀 Preparation 20 minutes, plus resting 🍀 Cooking 15-20 minutes

- 1 quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 57)
- 1 yellow pepper, core and seeds removed, thinly sliced
- 1 aubergine, thinly sliced
- 1 courgette, thinly sliced
- 250ml smooth tomato sauce or passata
- 250g mozzarella, sliced
- 200g pitted black olives
- dried oregano
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- rocket, to garnish

Put the aubergine, pepper and courgette into a large bowl, then add the olive oil and mix together well. Grill the vegetable pieces in batches on a hot griddle until they begin to soften. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Divide the dough into four balls, then form each into a round roughly 5mm thick. Top each pizza base with a few spoonfuls of tomato sauce, then use the back of the spoon to coat the base evenly to within 1cm of the edge. Top each base with mozzarella and a sprinkling of oregano. Arrange the vegetables evenly over the pizza, then scatter over a handful of black olives. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes, until the base is golden and the cheese has melted.

Remove the pizzas from the oven, top with a handful of rocket and serve immediately.

Photography and recipe © Mario Matassa

Classic Italian Pizza Recipes

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Pizza

Pizza is one of **Italy's most popular exports** as it's easy to make, has toppings to suit all tastes, and is loved by the whole family. From savoury to sweet varieties, we have all bases covered...





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Valentina's pizza perfection

Valentina Harris traverses the history of pizza with a selection of delicious recipes that range from the classic to the creative.

© Photography Charlotte Tolhurst Food styling Jacqueline Bellefontaine

If you are lucky enough to be shown around Naples by a Neapolitan foodie, they will no doubt take you to see the building where the first baker ever started to sell pizza from his basement kitchen, passing them up on to the street for people to enjoy as they walked along. They will tell you how proud they are of this invention, how it was one of the ways in which tomato was first used in cooking, how much the pizza cost, and what it looked like. What they won't tell you, because nobody knows, is the name of this enterprising baker.

The eating of pizza comes with its own set of rules. You should make sure your pizza has a frame around the edges, *la cornice* as it is called, because pizza is always eaten with your hands, so there should never be any risk of getting your fingers too messy. You are allowed to eat the slices folded in half (*a libretto*) or in half with the third corner folded back on itself (*a fazzoletto*), but the knife and fork must stay on the table.

Of course, pizza should be baked in a wood-fired oven for the right flavour and texture. In Naples these ovens never go out, so a perfect pizza takes just 90 seconds to bake. Fast, filling and delicious – no wonder they are so popular!

Valentina Harris is a noted authority on Italian food and culture, and she has written over 30 books including *Italia! Italia!* and *100 Great Risottos*. She has also made numerous TV appearances relating to her love of Italian cuisine, is a respected chef and teaches cookery courses.



Pizza marinara
recipe on page 10



The original pizza *Pizza alla marinara*

MAKES 2-4 PIZZAS

✿ Preparation
10 minutes

✿ Cooking
6-8 minutes

The topping on a pizza can vary according to taste and availability, but this is the classic recipe for the very first pizza recipe that was ever created – and there's no cheese in sight! Nor has it anything to do with either seafood or sailors, though the name would lead you to think otherwise. It is simply deliciously Neapolitan, packed with gutsy southern flavours.

- 1 quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 18)**
- 12 tbsp passata or chopped fresh tomatoes, or a mixture**
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped**
- 1 heaped tsp dried oregano**
- 8 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for greasing**
- about 16 fresh basil leaves**
- semolina flour, to dust**
- salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7. Take the prepared dough out of the bowl and knead it briefly, then cut it into 2 or 4 pieces, depending upon how many pizzas you want to make. Roll each one out thinly and arrange them on oiled baking sheets dusted lightly with semolina flour.

Cover thinly with the passata or tomatoes, leaving a border of about 3cm around the edges. Sprinkle with the garlic, oregano, olive oil, basil, and a little salt and pepper.

Bake the pizza in the oven, until the pizza is crisp and dry on the bottom (lift up one edge to see under the pizza). Serve at once.

Pizza with mushrooms *Pizza ai funghi*

MAKES 2-4 PIZZAS

✿ Preparation
15 minutes

✿ Cooking
10-12 minutes

This is a classic topping, which obviously relies on the tastiest mushrooms for the best results.

- 1 quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 18)**
- semolina flour, to dust**
- 6-8 tbsp passata**
- 200g fresh mozzarella, finely cubed or sliced**
- salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 8 tsp extra-virgin olive oil**
- 200g fresh mushrooms, thinly sliced (I prefer to cook these first in a frying pan with a little oil and salt, just until they are softened, so that they don't seep their liquid into the dough and make it go soggy, but you can put them on raw if you prefer)**
- 2-3 tbsp grated Parmesan**
- 8 paper-thin slices of Parma ham (optional)**

Preheat the oven to 240°C/Gas Mark 9. Take the prepared dough out of the bowl and knead it briefly, then cut it into 2 or 4 pieces, depending upon how many pizzas you want to make. Roll each piece out to the right size for your baking sheet. Oil the baking sheet with olive oil and sprinkle with a light dusting of semolina flour. Lay the pizza base on the baking sheet and brush lightly with olive oil.

Now you are ready for the rest of the toppings. Spoon the passata over the oiled pizza base, taking care not to spread it too close to the edges, leaving a clear section around the outside of the pizza. Arrange the mozzarella around the base, then add the mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper, and drizzle with about half the oil. Sprinkle with the Parmesan cheese. Bake in the oven for about 8 minutes, or until the base is crisp and the cheese has melted.

Take the pizza out of the oven and add the Parma ham (if using), laying it in the centre of the pizza. Return to the oven for a further 2 minutes, then take it out of the oven and serve.

TIP To make this even more special, dot a few teaspoons of fresh mascarpone or ricotta around the mushrooms before adding the seasoning, oil and Parmesan cheese.



Pizza with mushrooms
recipe on page 10



Calzone with tomato
sauce recipe on page 14

Pizza with rocket
and ricotta
recipe on page 14





MAKES 2-4 PIZZAS

✿ Preparation
10 minutes

✿ Cooking
12-15 minutes

Calzone with tomato sauce *Calzone con salsa di pomodoro*

MAKES 2-4 CALZONE

✿ Preparation
20 minutes

✿ Cooking
15 minutes

The ingredients given are for each calzone and can be varied according to personal taste.

1 quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 18)

semolina flour, to dust

2 tbsp fresh ricotta

3 slices of salame, chopped coarsely

2 sun-dried tomatoes in olive oil, drained and chopped

1 tsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

salt and freshly ground black pepper

extra-virgin olive oil, for greasing and brushing

for the sauce

2 garlic cloves, peeled, finely chopped

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

1 x 400g tin of chopped plum tomatoes

2 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Take the prepared dough out of the bowl and knead briefly, then cut into 2 or 4 pieces. Roll each piece into a round to fit the baking sheet. Oil the baking sheet and sprinkle with semolina flour. Lay the base on the sheet and brush lightly with oil.

Spread the ricotta on each circle of dough, keeping it to one side and to the centre of the circle so that you can fold it in half and seal it effectively. Sprinkle the salame, sun-dried tomatoes and parsley on top of the ricotta. Drizzle with a little olive oil and season lightly with salt and pepper. Fold the calzone in half and seal the open edge very thoroughly with the back of a fork. Bake in the oven for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile make the tomato sauce. Fry the oil and garlic together in a pan for about 5 minutes, but don't let the garlic go brown or the sauce will taste bitter. Add the tomatoes and stir thoroughly. Simmer for about 15 minutes, then season to taste and stir in the parsley. Serve alongside the calzone.



Pizza with rocket and ricotta *Pizza con la rucola e la ricotta*

I love this topping – it has to be one of my favourites. It is somehow modern, with plenty of different tastes and textures going on. I adore the combination of hot and cold ingredients. You could also add a handful of crisply fried pancetta cubes, scattered warm all over the top of the rocket seconds before serving.

1 quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 36)

semolina flour, to dust

6-8 tbsp passata

175g fresh mozzarella, finely cubed or sliced

salt and freshly ground black pepper

8 tsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to grease

8 tsp fresh ricotta

2-3 handfuls of fresh rocket leaves

2-3 tsp balsamic vinegar

Preheat the oven to 240°C/Gas Mark 9. Take the prepared dough out of the bowl and knead it briefly, then cut it into 2 or 4 pieces, depending on how many pizzas you want to make. Roll each piece out to the right size for your baking sheet. Oil the baking sheet with olive oil and sprinkle with a light dusting of semolina flour. Lay the pizza base on the baking sheet and brush lightly with olive oil.

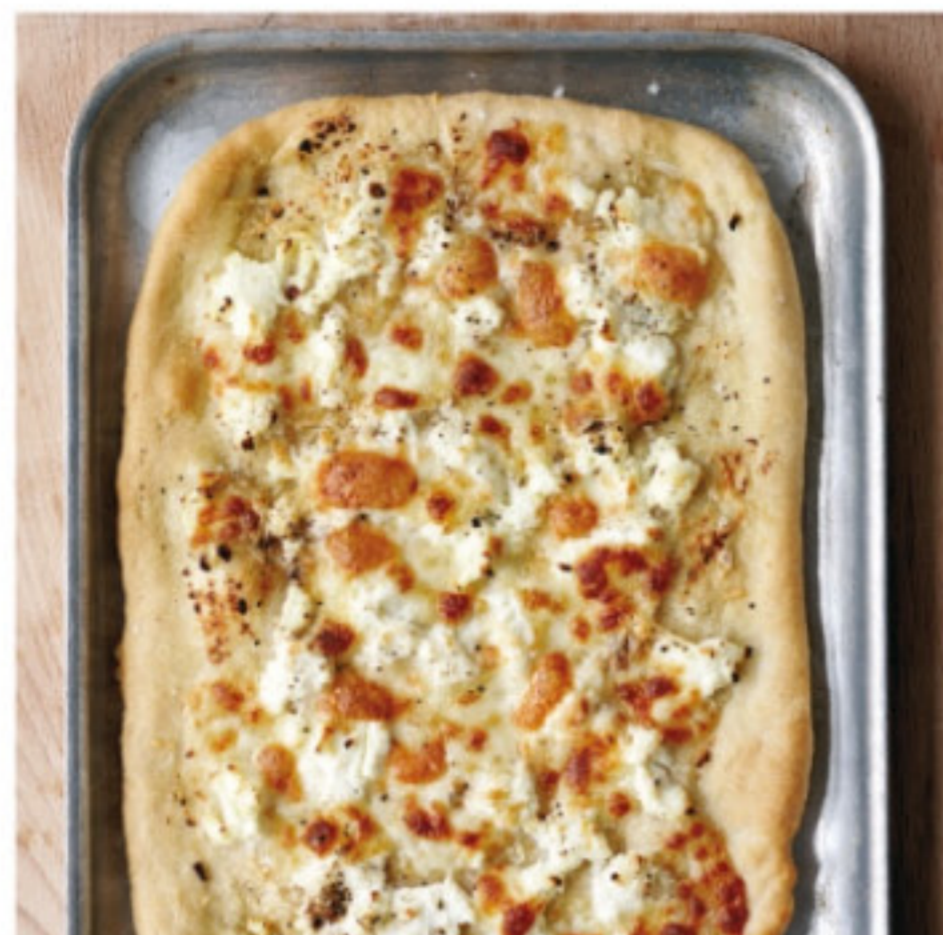
Now spoon the passata over the oiled pizza base, taking care not to spread it too close to the edges, leaving a clear section around the outside of the pizza. Arrange the mozzarella on top of the passata. Season, then drizzle with half the oil. Bake for 8 minutes, until the base is crisp and the cheese has melted.

Take the pizza out of the oven and add the ricotta, dotting it around the pizza. Return to the oven for a further 3 minutes, then take it out of the oven and pile the rocket on top. Drizzle with the rest of the olive oil and the balsamic vinegar, add a final sprinkling of salt and a turn or two of pepper, then serve.



White pizza
recipe on page 16





White pizza *Pizza bianca*

**MAKES 2-4
PIZZAS**

✿ Preparation
10 minutes

✿ Cooking
6-8 minutes

This is the classic pizza recipe for those who don't like tomatoes. You can vary the cheese you use as you wish and according to availability, but mozzarella is traditional, as is the deliciously sour cheese called Stracchino, which is widely available in most good Italian delicatessens.

1 quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 18)

semolina flour, to dust

200g fresh mozzarella, finely cubed or sliced

180g Stracchino or ricotta cheese

salt and freshly ground black pepper

8 tsp extra-virgin olive oil

2-3 tbsp freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat the oven to 240°C/Gas Mark 9. Take the prepared dough out of the bowl and knead it briefly, then cut it into 2 or 4 pieces, depending upon how many pizzas you want to make.

Roll each piece out to the right size for your baking sheet. Oil the baking sheet with olive oil and sprinkle with a light dusting of semolina flour. Lay the pizza base on the baking sheet and brush lightly with olive oil.

Scatter the cheeses over the oiled pizza base, then season with salt and pepper. Add a final drizzle of olive oil and slide into the oven to bake for about 6-8 minutes, or until lightly golden and bubbling. Take it out of the oven and serve at once.

TIP Adding a blue cheese, such as Gorgonzola, will give you more salty piquancy.

Thick-based pizza *Rianata*

**MAKES 2
30CM PIZZAS**

✿ Preparation
15 minutes

✿ Cooking
20-30 minutes

Unlike the wafer-thin pizza of Naples, this kind of pizza is very thick and doughy, almost a kind of deep focaccia with a bit of tomato on top. It is typical of Sicily, and makes a very tasty addition to a picnic or alfresco lunch table. Caciocavallo and Primosale are both Sicilian or southern Italian cheeses that are becoming more widely available in Britain. If you can't find cheeses such as these, feel free to use mozzarella or another stretchy cheese. I have sometimes used halloumi with quite similar results, as what you need to achieve for the sake of authenticity is a certain degree of saltiness.

about 1kg pizza dough (see page 18)

semolina flour, to dust

1 large red onion, peeled, sliced thinly

4 large ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeds removed, flesh chopped

250g fresh Caciocavallo, Primosale or mozzarella, cubed

10 anchovy fillets, cleaned and washed, cut into small pieces

5 tbsp olive oil

4 tbsp dried oregano

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 230°C/Gas Mark 8. Oil two 30cm pizza pans, then sprinkle the oiled bases with a little semolina flour. Divide the dough in half and spread half out on each pan, stretching it with your fingers. Try to make sure it is evenly spread and filling the pans to the edges.

Cover the dough with a layer of onion slices, then sprinkle with the tomatoes, cheese, anchovies, most of the remaining olive oil and the oregano. Top with a pinch of salt and a little black pepper. Bake in the oven for 20-30 minutes, then slide out of the tin, drizzle with a little extra-virgin olive oil and serve.

Thick-based pizza
recipe on page 16





Basic pizza dough

**MAKES 4 SMALL
OR 2 LARGE
PIZZAS**

✦ *Preparation*
**2 hours including
rising time**

✦ *Cooking*
None

400g plain white strong flour

1 large cherry-sized lump of fresh yeast, 1½ level tbsp dried yeast, or 1 sachet of easy bake yeast

about 25ml hand-hot water and 25ml milk in equal quantities, mixed together

2 tbsp olive oil

½ tsp salt

tepid water, to add to the dough

extra flour for your hands and for dusting over surfaces

2-3 tbsp semolina flour

extra-virgin olive oil, for greasing and brushing over the base

Pile the flour onto your worktop, then make a hollow in the centre with your fist. If using fresh or dried, mix the yeast with the liquid until dissolved, wait for it to react and become foamy, then pour this into the hollow in the flour. Easy bake yeast can just be added to the flour without dilution. Add the salt and half the oil and knead everything together really thoroughly and energetically for about 10-15 minutes, or until the dough is smooth, elastic and stretchy. You might need to add more liquid or more flour to get the texture quite right. The dough must not feel at all tacky or sticky at the end of the kneading process and should come away from the surface and from your hands easily.

Use the remaining oil to grease a clean bowl and transfer the ball of dough into the oiled bowl. Cover snugly with a clean cloth or a sheet of lightly oiled clingfilm, and put in a warm place to rise for about 90 minutes, or until doubled in size.

Take the dough out of the bowl and knead it briefly, then cut it into 2 or 4 pieces, depending upon how many pizzas you want to make. Roll or hand-flatten each piece out to the right size for your baking sheet. Oil the baking sheet with olive oil and sprinkle with a light dusting of semolina flour. Lay the pizza base on the baking sheet and brush lightly with olive oil. Now you are ready for the rest of the topping.

Remember that for a really authentic pizza, you need to roll the dough out as thinly as possible. Any leftover dough can be used to make a little focaccia by just rolling it out, brushing it with oil, sprinkling it with salt and baking it on an oiled sheet dusted with semolina flour.

Now try this...

If you would like to go for a more unusual and non-traditional topping how about trying some of these?

Spinach and smoked haddock with Gruyere

✦ Simply sprinkle **2 handfuls of coarsely chopped cooked spinach** leaves over the pizza base, then sprinkle with **50g of cooked, flaked undyed smoked haddock** and **2 tbsp of finely chopped mild onion**. Finish off with **50g of grated Gruyere cheese** and bake in a hot oven for about 10 minutes, or until the pizza base is crisp and the cheese is melted and running.

Leek and Gorgonzola with smoked ham

✦ Finely slice **1 medium-sized leek** and fry it gently in **1-2 tbsp of olive oil**, until completely soft. Spread this over the pizza base, then lay strips from **2 slices of smoked ham** and **40g of Gorgonzola** over the cooked leek. Bake in a hot oven for 10 minutes, or until the base is crisp and the topping is golden brown and melting.

Mascarpone, prawns and rocket with smoked mozzarella

✦ Spread **3 tbsp of mascarpone** over the pizza base. Add **2-3 tbsp of peeled prawns**. Sprinkle with **2 handfuls of rocket** and scatter with **40g of smoked mozzarella (Scamorza)**. Bake in a hot oven for 10 minutes, or until the base is crisp and the top golden brown.

Fontina and peas with prosciutto

✦ Sprinkle the pizza base with **3 tbsp of cooked peas**. Scatter with **2 slices of finely chopped prosciutto** and cover with thickly sliced **Fontina (about 40g)**. Bake in a hot oven for 10 minutes, until the base is crisp and the cheese is melted and golden.

IL GUSTO DEL TACCO ^{d'Italia}

Anna Maria Chirone Arnó

RECIPES FROM THE HEEL OF ITALY'S BOOT



Share in Anna Maria's love of good food with authentic recipes from the Salento region of Italy, including delicious Pizza recipes.

A famous Pugliese pizza recipe

"Pizza Barese"

INGREDIENTS

500g type 0 flour
250g potatoes, 10g salt
a pinch of sugar
25g of brewer's yeast
20 cherry tomatoes
oregano
extra virgin olive oil

PREPARATION

Wash and cook in cold water the potatoes, peel and mash them while they are still hot. Sieve the flour, add mashed potatoes, the salt and mix together.

Make a well and put the yeast crumbled with the sugar, add the water a little at a time, knead together until the dough is soft, leave to rise in a warm place.

When the dough has doubled in size, grease a baking tray, and with greased hands lay the mixture on the tray, leave to rise.

After making the dimples in the dough, put the tomatoes cut in half and upside down. Add a little salt, dust with oregano and drizzle well with the remaining oil. Bake at 200C° for about 30 minutes. Eat while still hot.

Taste it with a good glass of rosé from Salento!



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"The secret of my recipes is extra virgin olive oil from my land, Salento, with our centuries-old olive trees!!" Anna Maria

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A slice of Italian summer

Pippa Cuthbert and **Lindsay Cameron Wilson** put together a selection of light, unusual pizza ideas that are perfect for a warm summer evening.



Tomato salsa, salmon and caper *Pizza con salsa di pomodoro, salmone e capperi*

MAKES 1 PIZZA

❖ Preparation 20 minutes

❖ Cooking 20 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

2 tbsp capers, rinsed, drained and roughly chopped

1 garlic clove, peeled, crushed

½ a red onion, peeled, finely chopped

2 tomatoes, seeds removed, finely chopped

juice of ½ a lemon

1 tbsp chopped fresh dill

salt and freshly ground black pepper

125g smoked salmon slices

crème fraîche, to serve (optional)

Prepare the pizza base as described in the tip below. Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Combine the oil, capers and garlic in a small bowl and brush over the whole pizza base. Cook in the middle of the oven for 8-10 minutes, or until crispy and golden.

While the base is cooking, prepare the salsa. Combine the red onion, chopped tomatoes, lemon juice and dill in a small bowl and season well.

When the base is cooked remove it from the oven and lay the smoked salmon slices evenly over the top leaving a 1-2cm border uncovered around the edge. Scatter over the tomato salsa and serve immediately. Serve with a dollop of crème fraîche on each piece, if desired.

TIP To prepare the pizza base, press the dough down flat on a lightly floured surface, then using a floured rolling pin shape into a 25-30cm diameter circle. Using your knuckles, press just inside the edges to raise them slightly. Leave to rest for 10-15 minutes before topping.



Gorgonzola and roasted red onion *Pizza con gorgonzola e cipolle rosse*

MAKES 1 PIZZA ❖ Preparation 15 minutes ❖ Cooking 55 minutes

2 large red onions, peeled, each cut into 8 wedges

2 tbsp olive oil

2 tsp caster sugar

salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

250g Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled

1 handful fresh flat-leaf parsley, torn

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Place the onions in a roasting tin and toss

with the oil and sugar, then season. Roast in the oven for 30-40 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes, until caramelised. Remove from the heat, but leave the oven on.

Prepare the pizza base as described in the tip on the left. Top the base with Gorgonzola and roasted red onions, leaving a 1-2cm border around the edge. Bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes, or until the cheese has melted and the crust is golden. Sprinkle with parsley and serve immediately.



Puttanesca *Puttanesca*

MAKES 1 PIZZA

✿ Preparation 15 minutes

✿ Cooking 15 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

½ a quantity sweet cherry tomato sauce (see recipe opposite)

8 anchovy fillets in oil, drained

10 kalamata olives

2 tbsp capers

1 tsp finely chopped peperoncini

3 tbsp grated Parmesan

extra-virgin olive oil, to drizzle

2 tbsp roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley

Prepare the pizza base as described in the tip on page 21. Preheat the oven to 220°C/ Gas Mark 7.

Spoon the sauce evenly over the pizza base leaving about a 1-2cm border uncovered around the edge. Top with the anchovies, olives, capers, peperoncini and Parmesan. Cook in the middle of the oven for around 10-12 minutes, until the crust is golden and the cheese is bubbling.

Remove from the oven and finish with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkling of parsley. Serve immediately.

TIP Peperoncini are small red, slightly sweet, Italian chillies. If they are not available, you can substitute them for any type of red chilli instead.

Florentina *Florentina*

MAKES 1 PIZZA ✿ Preparation 15 minutes ✿ Cooking 20 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

½ quantity of pizza sauce (see page 33)

1 garlic clove, peeled, thinly sliced

180g baby spinach leaves, blanched, and well-drained

100g mozzarella, sliced

a pinch of grated nutmeg

20g Parmesan, grated

1 spring onion, finely sliced

2 free-range eggs

extra-virgin olive oil

freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Prepare the pizza base as described in the tip on page 21.

Spread the tomato sauce evenly over the base leaving a 1-2cm border uncovered around the edge. Scatter the garlic, spinach and mozzarella over the sauce. Finely grate a little nutmeg all over the pizza, then sprinkle the Parmesan and spring onion on top.

Cook in the middle of the oven for 6 minutes, then open the oven, pull out the rack and quickly crack the eggs onto the centre of the pizza. Return to the oven and cook for a further 4-6 minutes, or until crispy and golden.

Once the pizza is cooked, drizzle it with a little olive oil and a grind of black pepper, then serve immediately.

Italian basics

SWEET CHERRY TOMATO SAUCE

MAKES ENOUGH FOR 2 PIZZAS

800g cherry tomatoes, cut in half

2 garlic cloves, peeled, sliced

2 sprigs of rosemary, needles only

1 tbsp runny honey

1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place the tomatoes, cut-side up, on a baking sheet. Sprinkle over the garlic slices and rosemary needles, then evenly drizzle over the honey and oil. Season with salt and pepper and roast in the oven for 10-12 minutes, or until the tomatoes are bursting.

Remove from the oven and allow to cool before tipping the tomatoes and all the juices into an airtight container. This sauce can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 3-4 days.



Sweet Honey pizza base

**MAKES 2 X 30CM THICK-CRUST BASES OR
4 X 30CM THIN-CRUST BASES**

2 tsp dried granular yeast

125ml lukewarm water

175ml lukewarm full-cream milk

175ml runny honey

1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

1 large free-range egg, beaten

finely grated zest of 1 lemon

8g saffron powder (optional)

1 tsp salt

550-600g plain flour

Sprinkle the yeast into the water. Leave to dissolve for 5-10 minutes.

Add the milk, honey, oil, egg, lemon zest and saffron (if using) to the yeast mixture and stir well. Sift the salt and flour into the wet mixture and mix to a dough, adding additional flour if necessary to form a ball. Transfer the mixture to a floured surface and knead for 10-15 minutes, or until smooth and elastic. Return the dough

to a clean bowl and leave covered for about 1½ hours, or until doubled in size.

Knock the dough back and divide into two or four pieces, depending on the desired thickness of the base, and shape into 25-30cm rounds. Leave the dough to rest for 10-15 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7. Add your toppings. Cook the pizzas in the middle of the oven for 10-12 minutes for a thin base or 15-18 minutes for a thicker base, or until lightly golden and crispy.

Grape, raisin and Vin Santo pizza

Pizza con uva, uvetta e Vin Santo

MAKES 1 PIZZA

❖ Preparation 15 minutes, plus soaking

❖ Cooking 15 minutes

75g raisins

50ml Vin Santo or Marsala

1 x 30cm thick crust sweet honey pizza base (see recipe on page 24)

200g seedless red and black grapes

1-2 tbsp demerara sugar

mascarpone or crème fraîche, to serve (optional)

Soak the raisins in the Vin Santo or Marsala overnight. Prepare the pizza base as described in the tip on page 21. Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Evenly scatter the soaked raisins and grapes over the base leaving a 1-2cm border around the edge. Sprinkle over the sugar and drizzle over any extra Vin Santo that was not absorbed by the raisins.

Cook in the middle of the oven for 10-12 minutes, or until golden and crispy. Remove from the oven and serve immediately with a dollop of mascarpone or crème fraîche on top of each slice, if liked.

❖ **READER OFFER**

Readers can buy *Pizza* by Pippa Cuthbert & Lindsay Cameron Wilson (published by New Holland, RRP £12.99), with a 25 per cent discount plus free UK p&p. To order please visit www.newhollandpublishers.com and enter code 'taste italia' at the checkout. Offer ends 31 August 2011.



Italian Basics

CARAMELISED

ONIONS

1 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp unsalted butter

2 large onions, peeled, thinly sliced
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1½ tsp anchovy paste (optional)

Heat the olive oil and butter in a large frying pan over a medium-high heat. Add the onions and reduce the heat to low. Sauté until softened, stirring occasionally. Add a sprinkling of salt and pepper, but not too much salt as the anchovy paste will add a salty kick. Continue to sauté over a low heat for about 20-30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until brown and caramelised. Mix in the anchovy paste, stir, and remove from the heat. These onions can be kept in the fridge for up to 1 week.



Caramelised onion, prosciutto and peach pizza

Pizza con cipolle caramellate, prosciutto e pesche

MAKES 1 PIZZA ❖ Preparation 20 minutes ❖ Cooking 50 minutes

1 quantity of caramelised onions (see recipe above)

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

8 pieces of thinly sliced prosciutto, torn

2 small peaches, each cut into 8 wedges

75g goats' cheese, crumbled

freshly ground black pepper

Prepare the caramelised onions and set aside. Prepare the pizza base as described

in the tip on page 21. Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Spoon the onions over the base leaving a 1-2cm border uncovered around the edge. Top with pieces of prosciutto and 12 peach wedges. Finish with crumbled goats' cheese and a little ground pepper.

Bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes, until the crust is golden. Serve immediately.

Francesco Mazzei

meets

PizzaExpress

In February 2010, chef Francesco Mazzei joined forces with **PizzaExpress** to spread his passion for southern Italian food all over the UK. We take a look at what happened...



Francesco teaches the PizzaExpress chefs how to cook his new recipes.

When Fay Maschler and Simon Davis were set the task of finding a new guest chef for PizzaExpress at the end of 2009 they immediately thought of Francesco Mazzei, an energetic young chef with a passion for pizza pulsing through his veins. Spotting an opportunity to spread his love of southern Italian food beyond the kitchens of L'Anima and onto the tables of every PizzaExpress in the country, Francesco agreed. At the start of the venture he explained, "I'm excited to be working with PizzaExpress. I've been able to marry my creative strengths with their skill in taking great quality food to such a wide audience; thousands of people every day."

SOUTHERN ITALY COMES TO THE UK

On 2 February 2010, after months of working with Antonio Romani, executive chef of PizzaExpress, to concoct six perfect southern Italian signature dishes, then teaching thousands of *pizzaiolos* around the country how to cook the recipes, the new menu was finally released. Francesco's contribution included two starters, three pizzas and a pasta, all inspired by meals Francesco used to eat when he was growing up in Calabria. Not only did Francesco unveil the cooking of southern Italy to the British public through these recipes, he filled them with authentic ingredients too. Overall, Francesco introduced 14 new ingredients to the PizzaExpress menu, including Oro Verde, a local olive oil from his hometown in Calabria, Salsiccia Calabrese DOP, and the fragrant oregano of the region. PizzaExpress was so impressed with the quality and flavour of these ingredients that they have become essential in all recipes on the menu, not just Francesco's signature dishes – a real success in bringing a taste of Calabria to the UK.

Now here is your chance to try your hand at some southern cooking with the three pizzas that Francesco designed exclusively for PizzaExpress. *Bon appetito!*



Basic pizza dough

MAKES TWO PIZZA BASES

150ml tepid water

1 tsp sugar

15g fresh yeast or 2 level tsp dried yeast

225g plain flour, plus extra for working

1½ tsp salt

olive oil

Measure the water into a bowl. Add the sugar and crumble the fresh yeast into the liquid with your fingers, then swirl the liquid until the sugar and yeast are dissolved. If you're using dried yeast, sprinkle it over the surface of the water and whisk it in with a fork. Allow the



Francesco with his daughter Mia Sofia.

mixture to stand for 10-15 minutes in a warm place, until froth starts to develop on the surface.

Sift the flour and salt into a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre and pour the yeast liquid in. Lightly oil or flour your hands and gradually incorporate the flour and liquid until they bind together.

Sprinkle a work surface generously with flour. Tip the dough onto the surface and scrape out any that is sticking to the bowl. Begin kneading the dough, and after about 5-10 minutes the dough ball should become smooth and silky, soft and supple.

Leave the dough to rise, then 'knock it back'. (This releases large air bubbles which otherwise make the pizza uneven. To do this, rub a little oil or flour on your fingers and slide them down the side of the bowl, reaching down and underneath the dough. Gently lift up the dough and punch it down again.) Divide the dough into two equal sections to give you two lumps of dough each weighing about 200g. Roll each into a ball on the palm of your hand, until it is sealed underneath. Place on the floured work surface. Cover each ball with an upturned mixing bowl, a damp cloth or foil, and leave to rest for 10-20 minutes, before prepping for the pizza pan.

Preheat the oven to 230-260°C/Gas Mark 8. Never put a pizza in the oven until it has reached its full heat. When the dough balls have rested and are soft to the touch but not too springy, they are ready to be stretched and spread into pizza trays.

Stretching the dough is an art in itself. Pizzaiolos start with plenty of flour on the table and give the dough ball a sharp slap. Next flatten the dough using your fingers and a gentle amount of pressure. (Avoid using your fingertips as too much pressure will kill the yeast). Spread the dough with a baton the diameter of a broom handle or a rolling pin. Using one hand only, exert a light pressure on the middle of the baton as you roll it (too heavy rolling will make it very tough). Keep the

dough narrow until you have reached an oblong shape, roughly 18cm wide and 35cm long. When you have rolled out each dough ball, dust off any surplus flour and put each in a lightly oiled mesh screen for cooking, patting it gently. (The mesh allows air and heat to get underneath the pizza to make it crispier). During cooking the dough expands slightly, so make a rim around the edge to hold the filling. Do this by lightly and evenly tapping the rim of the dough about 1cm from the edge. Your pizza is now ready for the toppings.

Basic tomato sauce recipe

MAKES ENOUGH FOR 4 PIZZAS

1 large onion, peeled, finely chopped

1 garlic clove, peeled, finely chopped

1 tbsp olive oil

400g Italian plum tomatoes (use a tin if fresh are unavailable)

2 tbsp tomato purée

salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 bay leaf, crushed

oregano

Cook the onions and garlic in a pan with the oil for about 10 minutes, just enough to let the vegetables soften, not brown or fry. Add the tomatoes, tomato purée, seasoning, the bay leaf and a sprinkling of oregano. Stir well to dissolve and disperse the purée, then leave to simmer and reduce until you have a thickish sauce.

The sauce keeps well in a screw-top jar in the fridge. Variations: to the onion and garlic add any of the following, finely chopped: celery, peppers (green, yellow or red), leeks, parsley, Italian fennel, carrots.



Calabrese (left)

MAKES 1 PIZZA

✿ Preparation 40 minutes, plus resting

✿ Cooking 15 minutes

Francesco's Calabrese pizza packs a typical southern punch with its carnival of the hottest Italian Calabrese sausage, fresh green chillies, roquito peppers, the spicy soft sausage called *N'Duja*, watercress dressed with pesto, fior di latte mozzarella and oregano. This showstopper is the only rectangular pizza on the PizzaExpress menu, designed to honour Francesco's grandmother's belief that this is how pizzas really should be.

½ a quantity of dough (see page 26)

80g tomato sauce (see page 27)

45g mozzarella cheese, cut into cubes

30g N'Duja sausage or paste

2 fresh green chillies, finely sliced

30g fresh roquito peppers, chopped, or from a jar, drained, chopped

1 each of yellow and red peppers, seeds and core removed, sliced

20g Grana Padano, grated

30g Calabrese sausage (DOP), sliced

a pinch of Calabrian oregano

50g fior di latte mozzarella

20g watercress

1 tbsp fresh pesto

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Stretch the dough into a rectangle. Spread the tomato sauce evenly over the base, leaving a 1cm gap around the edge. Scatter the cubes of mozzarella over the top.

Break the N'Duja sausage into small pieces and scatter evenly over the pizza base. Add the roquito peppers, chillies and peppers.

Sprinkle half the Grana Padano all over and add the slices of Calabrese sausage. Season with oregano. Place in the oven.

While the pizza is cooking, place the watercress and pesto into a bowl and mix. Remove the pizza from the oven after 10-12 minutes. Tear the fior di latte mozzarella into 10 pieces and scatter over the pizza. Toss the watercress and pesto gently on top. Finish with the remaining Grana Padano.

TIP N'Duja is a slightly unusual ingredient in the UK, but you can buy a delicious N'duja paste at www.gourmelli.com



Mia Sofia (above)

MAKES 1 PIZZA ✿ Preparation 40 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 15 minutes

Inspired by and named after Francesco's young daughter and her love of all mushrooms both domestic and wild, the Mia Sofia is a forest floor of Portobello, cup and oyster mushrooms infused with truffle paste, then topped with mozzarella, chives, oregano and Calabrian olive oil. This big, beautiful *bianca* (no tomatoes) pizza is made on a thin, crispy base and finished with parsley and Grana Padano.

½ a quantity of dough (see page 26)

85g mozzarella, cut into cubes

40g cupped mushrooms, finely sliced

40g oyster mushrooms, finely sliced

40g Portobello mushrooms, finely sliced

10g truffle paste (from a good Italian deli)

a handful of chives, chopped

1 tsp Calabrian olive oil

½ a garlic clove, peeled, chopped

20g Grana Padano, grated

a pinch of Calabrian oregano

1 tbsp flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Stretch the dough into a large circle, then

scatter the mozzarella evenly over the top to cover the surface of the dough.

Combine all the mushrooms in a bowl. Add the chives and truffle paste, then a teaspoon of the Calabrian olive oil along with the garlic and half of the Grana Padano. Mix all the ingredients together and scatter them over the pizza, trying to ensure an even covering. Season with a pinch of oregano and place in the oven. Cook for around 10-12 minutes, until the pizza looks crisp and golden.

Remove the pizza from the oven, add the remaining Grana Padano and sprinkle with chopped parsley to serve.

Rustichella

MAKES 1 PIZZA ✦ Preparation 40 minutes plus resting ✦ Cooking 15 minutes

On the traditional PizzaExpress tomato, mozzarella and Calabrian oregano foundation is built a covering of crackling Italian pancetta, marinated roasted tomatoes, rocket, and Grana Padano, plus a trickle of caesar dressing.

½ a quantity of dough (see page 26)

80g tomato sauce (see page 27)

65g mozzarella cheese, cut into cubes

a pinch of Calabrian oregano

4 thin slices of Italian smoked pancetta

40g rocket

4 whole sun-dried tomatoes

28ml PizzaExpress caesar dressing

15g Grana Padano, shaved

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Stretch the dough into a large circle, then spread the tomato sauce evenly over the base, leaving a 1cm gap around the edge. Scatter the mozzarella cheese on top.

Lay the slices of pancetta out in a baking tray and cook in the oven for about 2 minutes, until golden.

Place the pizza base in the oven and cook for around 10-12 minutes.

Remove the pizza from the oven and scatter the rocket and sun-dried tomatoes over the base of the pizza. Trickle some caesar dressing gently over the top, then place the strips of crispy smoked pancetta on top. Finish with a pinch of Calabrian oregano and some shavings of Grana Padano, then serve immediately.



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Championing the pizza cause

World Pizza Champion **John Lanzafame** pays homage to Italy's most famous export with five award-winning pizza recipes that will delight the whole family.

When I hear the words 'pizza champion' I just laugh – it was a role I fell into by accident. I was in the right place at the right time, and entered the competition without having any expectations. I'd only been cooking pizzas for a short time and there I was competing against some of the best pizza chefs in the world, and winning. I was so proud and my winning pizza, a calzone filled with river calamari, remains my all-time favourite.

My pizza philosophy is simple – less is more. You just need to really concentrate on one flavour rather than trying to include a number of different ones. I would much rather make a lot of little pizzas using a few of my favourite ingredients than one big pizza with everything piled on top. I often find myself making pizzas from ingredients that are leftover from the night before too. Again, keep it simple but feel free to experiment and see what you can create. Throughout the next few pages you'll find a selection of different pizzas to try, some of a more classic nature such as double-smoked ham and cheese mini pizzas, through to the slightly more unusual foot-long lamb pizza and smoked trout calzone. I've finished with a sweet poached pear and almond version, which some say isn't a 'real' pizza but I love it, and so does anyone who has ever eaten it. I hope you enjoy it too.

John Lanzafame has always had a passion for Italian cuisine, and currently holds the title of World Pizza Champion. He previously owned Lanzafame restaurant in Sydney, then became Executive Chef at Hugo's Lounge and Hugo's Bar Pizza, also in Sydney. John often appears on Australia's *Ready Steady Cook*.

Bresaola and basil pizza
recipe on page 37

Italian basics

PIZZA SAUCE

MAKES 250ML

**250g tin of chopped
Italian tomatoes**

**1 handful of fresh basil
or oregano leaves**

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put the tomatoes and basil or oregano
in a food processor, season to taste,
then blend until smooth.

This sauce can be stored in the fridge
for up to five days. If you do not need
all of the sauce, you can freeze any
remaining for up to three months.

Foot-long lamb pizza
recipe on page 37

Italian basics

ONION CONFIT

MAKES 375ML

**2 small onions, peeled,
finely chopped**

150ml olive oil

Preheat the oven to 120°C/Gas Mark ½. Put the onion in a small ovenproof dish with the oil and bake for 2 hours, making sure the onion does not colour. Remove from the oven, cool, then spoon into a 375ml-capacity sterilised jar. Seal and refrigerate for up to three months.

CHILLI CONFIT

MAKES 250ML

**350g fresh long red or green chillies,
halved, seeds removed, thinly sliced**

150ml olive oil

Preheat the oven to 120°C/Gas Mark ½. Put the chillies and oil in a small ovenproof dish and bake for 2 hours, making sure the chilli does not colour.

Remove from the oven, cool, then store in a 250ml-capacity sterilised jar.

Seal and refrigerate for up to three months.



Double-smoked ham
and cheese mini pizzas
recipe on page 37



Italian Basics

PIZZA DOUGH

MAKES 170G DOUGH

1 tsp dried yeast

1 tsp salt

100ml warm water, you may need extra

2 tsp olive oil, plus extra for greasing

160g plain flour, sifted

Put the yeast, salt and water into a small bowl and whisk until combined. Gradually whisk in the olive oil, then leave in a warm place for 10 minutes, until the mixture starts to bubble.

Add the flour and knead for 15 minutes, until the dough is elastic. Rub the inside of a bowl with oil, roll the dough around to coat, then place in the bowl, cover, and leave for 1-1½ hours, until doubled in size.

Punch down the dough to release any trapped air, then place on a baking tray lined with greaseproof paper. Cover and leave for 15 minutes before using in a recipe.

Smoked trout calzone
recipe on page 38



Bresaola and basil pizza

Pizza con bresaola e basilico

MAKES A 30CM ROUND PIZZA

❖ Preparation 20 minutes

❖ Cooking 10 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

½ quantity of pizza sauce (see page 33)

8 basil leaves

75g mozzarella, grated

1 plum tomato, thinly sliced

6 slices of bresaola (salted beef)

125ml black olive tapenade

coarse semolina flour, to dust

Place a pizza stone or heavy-based oven tray in the oven, then preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 9.

Lightly dust a worksurface with semolina, then roll the dough into a 30cm round. Place on a pizza tray and prick the base all over with a fork. Spread the pizza sauce over the base, then scatter over the basil, mozzarella and tomato slices. Place on the preheated stone or tray and bake in the oven for 5-8 minutes, or until the base is golden and crisp. Remove from the oven, top with the bresaola, then drizzle with the olive tapenade to serve.

TIP This recipe only requires half of the pizza sauce quantity. Either freeze the other half to use on another pizza, or use in other ways, for example as a simple pasta sauce.



Foot-long lamb pizza

Pizza dell'agnello

MAKES A 30CM OBLONG PIZZA

❖ Preparation 25 minutes, plus 20 minutes infusing

❖ Cooking 10 minutes

120g lamb loin, trimmed of sinew, very finely chopped

2 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

80ml drained onion confit (see page 34)

1 tbsp chilli confit, finely chopped (see page 34)

coarse semolina flour, to dust

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

olive oil, to brush

sea salt, to sprinkle

1 plum tomato, chopped

juice of 1 lemon

1 tbsp grated Parmesan

Combine the lamb and parsley in a bowl with both the onion and chilli confits and leave to infuse for around 20 minutes. Place a pizza stone or heavy-based oven tray in the oven, then preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 9.

Lightly dust a worksurface with semolina, then roll the dough out lengthways into a 30cm oblong and place on a pizza tray. Spread the lamb mixture all over the base, then bring up the edges of the pizza to make a 2cm-wide border, covering over the edge of the filling as you go. Brush the border with olive oil, sprinkle with sea salt, then place on the preheated stone or tray and bake in the oven for 6-8 minutes, or until the base is golden and crisp.

Remove from the oven, season the chopped tomatoes to taste, then scatter over the top. Sprinkle with Parmesan, then drizzle with lemon juice and a little olive oil to serve.



Double-smoked ham and cheese mini pizzas

Mini pizza con prosciutto e formaggio

MAKES 8 X 6CM PIZZAS

❖ Preparation 20 minutes

❖ Cooking 10 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

½ quantity of pizza sauce (see page 33)

3 tbsp grated mozzarella

3 tbsp grated Cheddar

70g double-smoked ham, shredded, alternatively use smoked ham

1 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

1 tbsp onion confit (see page 34)

coarse semolina flour, to dust

Place a pizza stone or heavy-based oven tray in the oven, then preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 9.

Lightly dust a worksurface with semolina, then roll out the dough into a 30cm round. Using a 6cm cutter, cut out eight rounds from the dough, place on a pizza tray and prick the base all over with a fork. Spread the bases with pizza sauce, then sprinkle with the cheeses, ham, parsley and onion confit, in that order. Place on the preheated stone or tray and bake in the oven for 6 minutes, or until golden and crisp.

TIP These are the ideal size for children, but also perfect if different members of the family want different toppings – just make the pizza circles as normal and add your chosen toppings.



Smoked trout calzone

Calzone della trota

MAKES A 30CM CALZONE

❖ Preparation 25 minutes

❖ Cooking 20 minutes

- 8 mussels, cleaned**
- 2 red chillies, seeds removed, finely chopped**
- 1 anchovy fillet**
- 30g broccoli, blanched, finely chopped**
- 100g skinless smoked rainbow trout, bones removed, flesh flaked**
- 50g Provolone cheese, chopped**
- 40g buffalo mozzarella, torn**
- coarse semolina flour, to dust**
- 1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)**

Heat a small heavy-based saucepan over a medium-high heat until very hot, add the mussels, cover and shake for 2-3 minutes, or until the shells open. Pour the mussels into a colander placed over a bowl, discarding any that remain unopened. Remove the flesh and discard the shells. Return the mussel cooking liquid to the pan, add the chillies, anchovy, broccoli and trout, then stir over a low heat for 5 minutes, or until fragrant and well-combined. Remove from the heat, fold in the Provolone and mussels, then season to taste.

Place a pizza stone or heavy-based oven tray in the oven, then preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Lightly dust a work surface with semolina, then roll out the dough into a 30cm round and place on a pizza tray. Spread the trout mixture over one half of the base, sprinkle with the mozzarella, then fold the other half over the filling and pinch the edges together to prevent any juices escaping. Place on the preheated stone or tray and bake in the oven for 8-10 minutes, or until golden and crisp.



Poached pear and almond pizza

Pizza con pera e mandorla

MAKES 2 X 15CM PIZZAS

❖ Preparation 25 minutes

❖ Cooking 15 minutes

for the poached pears

- 500ml red wine**
- 230g caster sugar**
- 1 cinnamon stick**
- ¼ star anise**
- 3 cloves**
- 2 small, firm pears**

for the pizza

- 2 free-range egg whites**
- 115g caster sugar**
- 155g blanched almonds, finely ground**
- 25g white chocolate, finely chopped**
- coarse semolina flour, to dust**
- 1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)**
- 6 scoops of vanilla ice cream**
- 2 tbsp flaked almonds, toasted**
- icing sugar, to dust**

To make the poached pears, put the wine, sugar and spices in a saucepan over a medium heat and bring to a simmer. Peel and core the pears, then add to the pan, cover with a piece of greaseproof paper, reduce the heat to low, and simmer gently for 8 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat, cool the pears in the liquid, then remove and cut lengthways into 3cm thick slices.

Meanwhile, to make the almond mixture, whisk the egg whites to soft peaks, then gradually add the sugar and whisk until thick and glossy. Add the ground almonds and white chocolate, then mix well.

Place a pizza stone or heavy-based oven tray in the oven, then preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 9. Lightly dust a work surface with semolina, then roll the

dough out into two 15cm rounds, place on a tray and prick the base with a fork. Spread the base with 3 tbsp almond mixture and sprinkle with pear. Place the pizzas on the preheated stone and bake for 5 minutes, until the bases are golden and crisp. Remove from the oven, top with ice cream, then scatter with toasted almonds, dust with icing sugar and serve.

When it comes to Italian food, pizza has to be one of the dishes with most widespread appeal. Whether it's the crisp dough base, the rich tomato sauce, or the wide variety of ingredients that can adorn the top, there's an aspect which appeals to everyone – and John Lanzafame has them all covered in his book *Pizza Modo Mio*.

The book begins with a selection of basic recipes, including pizza dough, pizza sauce and a selection of confits. This leads on to a huge range of classic Italian pizza recipes, John's own special creations featuring everything from figs to cuttlefish, through pizza pies to calzone and children's varieties, and finishes up with dessert pizzas. It's a truly inspiring book that will have you reaching straight for your apron.

❖ **DISCOVER MORE**

Pizza Modo Mio by John Lanzafame (published by Murdoch Books, ISBN 978-1741962031), costs £14.99 and is available to buy from www.amazon.co.uk and all good bookshops.





Poached pear and almond pizza
recipe opposite



Straight from San Carlo

Franco Bellomusto, Executive Chef at San Carlo restaurant group, learnt how to cook pizza at the side of his mother. Now he passes on his skills to us as he recreates three pizzas from the San Carlo menu.

Franco Bellomusto is Executive Chef at San Carlo Group – the award-winning Italian family restaurant business that has venues in Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Leicester, Liverpool, Leeds and Signor Sassi in Knightsbridge Green, London. Visit www.sancarlot.co.uk or www.signorsassi.co.uk to find out more.

Pizza is a dish that has existed since time immemorial. The simple, classic Italian flatbread with its never-ending choice of toppings is one of the world's favourite dishes, and particularly close to the heart of Franco Bellomusto, Executive Chef at San Carlo Group – as he remembers his mother's recipe.

Franco explains: "Like most Italians I love pizza, but for me the best pizza will always be the ones made by my mother. As a child I lived in a rural area of southern Italy and it was traditional for the women to bake their own bread – huge loaves that would last the week. But before the bread could be baked, the wood-burning oven had to be stabilised – effectively cooled down – so that it was the right temperature. To do this, pizza and small breads were baked first as they needed to be cooked in a very hot oven.

"The ones my mother made had a thick base, today some people would call it 'deep pan', and were usually topped with simple but fresh ingredients – tomatoes, herbs and maybe black olives. The wonderful aroma from the oven would make us want to eat them straight away, and when we were allowed, oh they were delicious!

"The secret of making good pizza is to keep it simple. Flour, yeast, extra-virgin olive oil and salt are all you need for the base – joined by whatever your choice of toppings are."

San Carlo's Leicester-based restaurant has highlighted its association with the city's renowned Leicester Tigers Rugby Club by creating a novel (and now very popular) speciality – the Leicester Tigers' pizza. Give it a try below, and find two more overleaf.

Leicester Tigers' pizza

Pizza Leicester Tigers

MAKES 1 PIZZA ❖ Preparation 15 minutes ❖ Cooking 15 minutes

- 1 quantity of pizza dough, see page 36**
- 1 quantity of pizza sauce, see page 41**
- 7 tiger prawns, peeled**
- 1 red chilli, chopped**
- 1 garlic clove, peeled, chopped**
- olive oil**
- salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- a dash of white wine**
- 100g buffalo mozzarella, torn**
- 100g Red Leicester cheese, grated**

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place a pizza stone or baking tray in the oven to warm up. Knock down the dough with your knuckles, then turn out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead for 2-3 minutes to knock out the air bubbles. Roll the dough out using a rolling pin in a large circle.

Heat a little olive oil in a frying pan, add the chilli and garlic, then sauté briefly. Add the prawns, wine and seasoning to the pan and heat until the prawns are cooked.

Spread the pizza sauce over the dough base, leaving a slight border around the edges, then scatter the prawn mixture over the pizza sauce. Top with mozzarella and Red Leicester.

Remove the hot baking sheet from the oven and carefully slide the pizza onto it. Bake in the oven for about 10 minutes, until the pizza is golden and the cheese is melted.

A photograph of a pizza with shrimp and arugula toppings, resting on a stone surface in front of a wood-fired oven. The oven's interior is visible, showing a fire burning. The pizza is round and has a thick crust. The toppings include a layer of tomato sauce, melted cheese, several large shrimp, and a generous amount of fresh arugula leaves. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the pizza.

Italian basics

PIZZA SAUCE

4 peeled plum tomatoes, crushed

5 tbsp olive oil

1 garlic clove, peeled, chopped
salt and freshly ground black pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp dried oregano

$\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp dried basil

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl and mix together well. For the best flavour, leave to stand overnight.



Ortolana pizza

Pizza Ortolana

MAKES 1 PIZZA ❀ *Preparation 20 minutes* ❀ *Cooking 10 minutes*

- 1 quantity of pizza dough, see page 36**
- 1 quantity of pizza sauce, see page 41**
- 1 large red onion, peeled, sliced**
- 1 red pepper, peeled, deseeded, sliced**
- 1 yellow pepper, peeled, deseeded, sliced**
- 100g buffalo mozzarella, torn**
- 1 fresh tomato, diced**
- 100g baby spinach leaves, washed**

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place a pizza stone or baking tray in the oven to warm up. Knock down the dough with your knuckles, then turn out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead for 2-3 minutes to knock out the air bubbles. Roll the dough out using a rolling pin into a large circle.

Spread the pizza sauce over the dough, leaving a slight border around the edges.

First scatter the baby spinach leaves on top of the sauce, then arrange the onion and peppers on top. Finish with pieces of mozzarella and tomato.

Remove the hot baking sheet from the oven and carefully slide the pizza onto it. Bake in the oven for about 10 minutes, until the pizza is golden and the cheese is melted.



Chicken, mozzarella and Parmesan pizza

Pizza pollo parmigiana

MAKES 1 PIZZA ❀ Preparation 15 minutes ❀ Cooking 10 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough, see page 36

1 quantity of pizza sauce, see page 41

1 large cooked chicken breast, thinly sliced

100g buffalo mozzarella, torn

115g Parmesan shavings

5-6 fresh basil leaves, shredded, plus a few extra to serve

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place a pizza stone or baking tray in the oven to warm up. Knock down the dough with your knuckles, then turn out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead for 2-3 minutes to knock out the air bubbles. Roll the dough out using a rolling pin into a large circle.

Spread the pizza sauce over the dough, leaving a slight border around the edges.

Scatter the chicken over the sauce, then top with pieces of mozzarella and Parmesan shavings. Finish with a scattering of fresh basil.

Remove the hot baking sheet from the oven and carefully slide the pizza onto it. Bake in the oven for about 10 minutes, until the pizza is golden and the cheese is melted. Garnish with extra basil leaves to serve.

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Ursula's top picks

Ursula Ferrigno believes there's nothing quite as satisfying as making your own pizza. Here she shows us how with some of her crowd-pleasing recipes.

A pizza is basically a flatbread which is used as a base for toppings ranging from the simplest tomato, mozzarella and basil to more sophisticated concoctions, such as porcini and truffle paste. The very first pizza was created in Naples, a fact that the Neapolitans are very proud of, and was called pizza marinara, topped simply with fresh chopped tomatoes and basil. Even today, with pizzas being made all over the country, in fact all over the world, most people would argue that the best pizzas are still made in the south of Italy, where local wheat and water are used to produce the finest dough and crust according to traditional methods. In Italy, pizza-making is a serious business. There are rules and standards, and every professional *pizzaiola* (pizza-maker) must possess a licence from the government to ensure that he satisfies the criteria.

There really is nothing like making your own pizza, and it's an activity that the whole family can enjoy. Children in particular like getting their hands on the dough, then choosing their favourite toppings to scatter over the surface. The best type of flour to use for making pizzas is Italian '0' grade, not the '00' type used for pasta which isn't suitable, and one of my top time-saving tips for making pizza is to make double the quantity of dough and freeze half. Once out of the freezer and defrosting, the dough is rising at the same time! Pizza really is something you should enjoy creating, so I hope you are inspired by my recipes here and have fun making your own.

Ursula Ferrigno is an acclaimed Italian baker and cook. She was formally a principal tutor at The Cordon Vert School and now runs cookery classes in both Italy and England. She is also the author of several books about Italian cuisine, including *Trattoria*, *Truly Italian* and the *Complete Italian Cookery Course*.

Ursula Ferrigno

© Photography **Mike Cooper** Food styling **Genevieve Taylor**

Margherita pizza
recipe on page 48

Italian Basics

PIZZA DOUGH

MAKES TWO 25CM PIZZAS

15g fresh yeast, or 1½ tsp fast-action dried yeast

250g strong white unbleached flour

½ tsp sea salt

50ml olive oil, plus extra semolina flour, to dust

Measure 50ml warm water in a jug. Blend the fresh yeast (or dried yeast) with a little of this water.

Sift the flour and salt together into a large bowl. Make a well in the centre and add the oil, yeast liquid and some of the water. Mix together with a wooden spoon, gradually adding the remaining water to form a soft dough.

Turn the dough out onto a surface scattered with semolina flour, and knead vigorously for 10 minutes, until soft (don't be afraid to add more semolina to stop the dough sticking). Place in a lightly oiled bowl, then turn the dough around to coat with the oil. Cover the bowl with a tea towel and leave to rest in a warm place for 1½ hours, or until doubled in size.



Margherita pizza

Pizza margherita

**MAKES 2 X 25CM
PIZZAS**

✿ Preparation
25 minutes
plus resting

✿ Cooking
20 minutes

I love simple food: good ingredients, carefully combined and used at their freshest, are a joy. This fresh tomato and mozzarella pizza couldn't be more straightforward. For the best flavour, choose bright red, ripe tomatoes with a distinctive peppery aroma.

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 47)
a large handful of basil leaves, torn
675g cherry tomatoes, cut in half
a small handful of oregano leaves, chopped
250g mozzarella, grated
semolina flour, to dust
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. In the bottom of the oven, preheat two oiled baking sheets or pizza stones. Knock down the dough with your knuckles, then turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 2-3 minutes to knock out the air bubbles. Divide the dough in half.

On a lightly floured surface, preferably marble, roll out the pieces of dough very, very thinly, into a circle until 25-30cm in diameter. (They should be as thin as a paper napkin folded in four). Now lift each pizza base onto a cold baking sheet sprinkled generously with semolina (this will make it easier to slide the pizza off later).

Scatter the basil leaves over each of the pizza bases, then add the cherry tomato halves, chopped oregano, salt, pepper and grated mozzarella. Remove the hot baking sheets from the oven and slide the pizza bases onto them. Bake in the oven for about 20 minutes, until the tomatoes are softened and the cheese is bubbling and golden.

MAKES 1 PIZZA

✿ Preparation
30 minutes
plus resting

✿ Cooking
35 minutes

Red onion and goats' cheese pizza tart

Pizza con cipolle rosse e formaggio caprino

This is my version of the traditional French pizza-type tart, *pissaladière*. It is often made using pastry, but is equally delicious with a bread base. It makes a great vegetarian light lunch with some salad.

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 47)
3 tbsp olive oil
3 medium red onions, peeled, thinly sliced
1 tsp caster sugar
2 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed
1 tbsp roughly chopped thyme
150g goats' cheese, crumbled
semolina flour, to dust
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Wrap the pizza dough in clingfilm and set aside until ready to roll out. Heat the oil in a frying pan. Add the onion and fry gently for 15 minutes, until it has softened. Stir in the sugar and garlic, then fry for 5 minutes longer, until the onions are beginning to caramelise. Stir in the thyme, then set aside to cool slightly.

Unwrap the dough from the clingfilm, knock it back, then tip it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 5 minutes, until smooth and elastic. Roll it out into a large rectangle, then spoon the onions evenly over the dough base, leaving a narrow border of dough around the edges. Scatter the goats' cheese over the top and season with salt and pepper. Cover loosely and leave to prove for 30 minutes.


Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7 and warm a large baking sheet. Once the pizza has proved, remove the baking sheet from the oven, slide the pizza on top and bake the pizza in the oven for 12-15 minutes, until the dough looks golden. Leave to cool a little on a wire rack, then eat hot or cold.

TIP The caramelised red onion mixture in this recipe is incredibly versatile, so if you have any leftover, place it in a sealed jar and keep in the fridge to use another day. This can be used in tarts, spread on bruschetta for a light antipasti, or served alongside your favourite variety of cheese.

Red onion and goats' cheese pizza tart recipe opposite

Mushroom and truffle pizza
recipe on page 52





Mini fried potato pizza
recipe on page 52

Try this

ASPARAGUS CALZONE

MAKES 2

To make calzone, you simply fold the pizza dough over the filling and seal the edges, like a pasty.

1 quantity pizza dough (see page 47)

2 tender, young courgettes

300g asparagus spears

150g ricotta

1 tbsp grated Parmesan

2 tbsp olive oil

semolina flour, to dust

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Wrap the pizza dough in clingfilm and set aside until ready to roll out. Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6, and preheat two baking sheets or pizza stones. Slice the courgettes, place in a colander and sprinkle with salt. Leave for 20 minutes, then rinse under cold water and pat dry.

Snap off the woody ends of the asparagus, then add the spears to a saucepan of boiling water and cook for a couple of minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water. Cut into 5cm pieces and pat dry.

Put the asparagus, courgettes, ricotta and Parmesan in a bowl. Mix together and season to taste. Stir in 1 tbsp olive oil.

Unwrap the dough, divide in half, then on a lightly floured surface, roll it out into two 25-30cm rounds. Lift each round onto a cold baking sheet sprinkled with semolina. Pile half of the courgette filling on one side of each round, moisten the edge with water, and bring the uncovered side over the top of the filling. Using your fingers, press the edges together to seal, fold them up and crimp.

Brush the calzone with the remaining oil, slide onto the hot oiled baking sheets and bake for 20-25 minutes, until golden brown. Leave to stand for 10 minutes before serving.



MAKES 20 PIZZAS

✿ Preparation
25 minutes
plus resting
✿ Cooking
40 minutes

Mushroom and truffle pizza *Pizza norcina*

**MAKES 2 X 25CM
PIZZAS**

✿ Preparation
35 minutes
plus resting
✿ Cooking
40 minutes

I first enjoyed this pizza in Norcina, Umbria, a region that is famous for its truffles. It tasted so good that I returned the following day for another. Truffle-hunting is taken very seriously in Umbria: a good truffle is a real prize and it becomes a talking point for months on end. Here I have used truffle paste, made from a combination of truffle and porcini mushrooms, and available in jars.

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 47)
25g dried porcini mushrooms
250g large flat mushrooms, wiped, sliced
2 tbsp olive oil
1 garlic clove, peeled, crushed
250g mozzarella, grated
25g truffle paste
semolina flour, to dust
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Wrap the pizza dough in clingfilm and set aside until ready to roll out. Preheat the oven to 200°C/ Gas Mark 6, and preheat two baking sheets or pizza stones in the oven.

Soak the dried porcini in a bowl of warm water, enough to cover, for about 20 minutes, then drain and pat dry. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan, add the porcini and sliced fresh mushrooms and fry until softened. Add the garlic and some salt and pepper.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pizza dough very thinly into two 25-30cm rounds. Now lift each pizza base onto a cold baking sheet sprinkled with semolina. Top the pizza bases with the mushrooms and mozzarella, then dot little mounds of truffle paste all over the pizzas. Remove the hot baking sheets from the oven and slide the pizzas onto them. Bake in the oven for around 20-25 minutes, until golden and bubbling. Serve immediately.



Mini fried potato pizzas *Culturelli*

Culturelli are small fried pizzas associated with the traditional meatless meals served on Christmas Eve in Italy. In Soverato, a small coastal village on the Calabrian instep of the Italian boot, these delicious pizzas are made outdoors in huge community frying pans placed over wood-burning fires.

300g strong white flour
1½ tsp fine sea salt
10g fresh yeast, crumbled
100ml water, at body temperature
olive oil
1 medium potato, boiled, peeled and pushed through a ricer or sieve

Put the flour and salt in a large bowl, mix together, then make a well in the centre. Dissolve the yeast in a little of the water. Add 1 tbsp oil and the potato to the well along with the dissolved yeast, then mix in enough of the remaining water to make a damp dough.

Turn the dough out of the bowl and knead well on a lightly floured worksurface for about 10 minutes, until the mixture is smooth and elastic. Return to a clean bowl, cover with a tea towel, and leave to rise for around 1 hour.

Knock back the dough and knead again on a lightly floured surface for 5 minutes. Allow the dough to rest for 5 minutes before pinching off walnut-sized pieces and forming them into 5cm rounds. Put the rounds on a lightly floured surface and continue rolling out small pizzas until all the dough has been used up.

Heat 5cm olive oil in a heavy frying pan. Fry the pizza rounds in batches of three or four at a time, until they are golden on both sides. Remove them with a slotted spoon, drain on kitchen paper, and serve immediately.

Sardinian pizza
recipe on page 54





Sardinian pizza

Pizza sarda

**MAKES 2 X 25CM
PIZZAS**

❖ *Preparation*
35 minutes
plus resting

❖ *Cooking*
1 hour 10 minutes

- 225g strong white flour**
- 1 tsp fine sea salt**
- 65g unsalted butter, softened and diced**
- 15g fresh yeast, crumbled**
- 4 tbsp water, at body temperature**
- 1 large free-range egg, beaten**
- for the topping*
- 5 tbsp olive oil**
- 750g onions, peeled, finely sliced**
- 500g ripe tomatoes, skin removed, roughly chopped**
- salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 55g anchovy fillets**
- a few black olives, cut in half, pitted**
- a handful of fresh oregano leaves**

To make the dough, mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. Rub in the butter until the texture is like breadcrumbs, then make a well in the centre. Dissolve the yeast in the water, then add to the well along with the egg. Mix to a firm but pliable dough, adding more water if needed. When the dough has come away cleanly from the sides of the bowl, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead thoroughly for 10 minutes. Form into a ball, place in an oiled bowl, and cover with a damp tea towel. Leave to rise for about 1½ hours, until it has doubled in size.

Make the topping. Heat the oil in a heavy pan and fry the onion gently, covered, for 20 minutes, until soft. Add the tomatoes and seasoning, then cook, uncovered, for about 20 minutes, until the sauce is thick. Leave to cool.

When the dough has risen, knock it back and turn it out onto a floured surface. Divide into two and knead each piece lightly for 2-3 minutes. Roll the dough out to a thickness of 1cm and a diameter of about 25cm. Cover with a damp tea towel and leave to prove for 10 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Spread the cold topping evenly over the two pizzas. Criss-cross with strips of anchovy, then scatter over the olives. Sprinkle with oregano and bake in the oven for 25 minutes, until golden.

Pizza tartlets

Pizzette

**MAKES 12
MINI PIZZAS**

❖ *Preparation*
35 minutes

❖ *Cooking*
55 minutes

Throughout Italy, there are as many toppings for pizza as there are sauces for pasta, and these pizza tartlets are a common festival food among Sicilians. This recipe gives the amounts to make four different toppings, but if you want to leave any out, then adjust the quantities accordingly.

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 47)

olive oil

ingredients for four pizza tartlet toppings (see page 55)

semolina flour, to dust

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Wrap the pizza dough in clingfilm and set aside until needed. Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Topping 1: Roast the peppers in the oven for 20 minutes. Leave to cool, then remove the skin and seeds, and cut the flesh into thin strips. Set aside. Keep the oven on, and turn it up to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Topping 3: Heat about 2 tbsp oil in a frying pan over a medium heat and sauté the aubergine for 7-9 minutes, stirring constantly. Season and set aside. Topping 1: Heat a little more oil in the pan and sauté the mushrooms for 4 minutes. Season and set aside. Topping 4: Add a little more oil to the pan and sauté the onion. Add 75ml water and cook for around 8 minutes, or until the onion is coarsely wilted.

Topping 2: Parboil the courgette in a pan of salted water for 5 minutes. Lift out with a slotted spoon, cut into thin slices, and set aside. Topping 4: Parboil the rocket in the same water for 2 minutes. Drain and squeeze dry.

Topping 2: Heat a little more olive oil in a frying pan over a high heat and sauté the tomatoes for 8 minutes, stirring constantly. Transfer to a bowl, toss with the mint, and set aside.

Topping 4: Heat 1 tbsp oil in the frying pan, add the garlic and rocket, and toss well for 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper, then set aside.

Oil 12 x 7.5cm round individual tart pans. Unwrap the pizza dough, knock back a little, then place on a lightly floured surface and knead for 2-3 minutes. Roll into a large rectangle about 3mm thick. Cut into 12 x 7.5cm circles and arrange in the tart pans, pressing the edges against the sides. Cover the surface of each tart with parchment paper and weigh it down with baking beans. Bake the tart cases blind for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and remove the beans and paper.

Top three of the little tarts with peppers, mushrooms, and Fontina; three with courgette, tomato mix and mozzarella; three with aubergine, tuna, mozzarella and olives; and three with onion, rocket, garlic and paprika. Either serve straight away or place back in the oven for a couple of minutes to melt the cheese slightly.

Pizza tartlets
recipe opposite



Pizza tartlet toppings...

for topping one

1 small red pepper
1 small yellow pepper
200g mixed mushrooms
ie porcini or field, finely
chopped
100g Fontina cheese, shaved

for topping two

4 small courgettes, trimmed
4 ripe plum tomatoes, cut
in half
1 tsp finely chopped mint
100g smoked mozzarella
or Scamorza, cut into
1cm cubes

for topping three

1 small aubergine, peeled,
cut into 1cm cubes
1 x 100g tin of tuna in brine,
drained
100g buffalo mozzarella, cut
into 1cm cubes
12 black olives, pitted,
chopped

for topping four

2 medium onions, peeled,
finely sliced
about 75ml water
a handful of rocket leaves,
stems removed
½ a garlic clove, peeled,
crushed
½ tsp paprika

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4 takes on VEGETARIAN PIZZAS

Pizzas are loved by all, from kids to adults and vegetarians to meat-eaters. Here are **four sweet and savoury ideas** that put fruit and vegetables under the spotlight.



Italian basics

BASIC DOUGH RECIPE

MAKES 4 PIZZAS

500g plain flour
300ml tepid water
1 tsp salt
20g fresh yeast

Make the dough by dissolving the yeast in the water. Place the flour and salt on a work surface, make a well in the centre, and add the water and yeast. With your fingers, gradually draw some of the flour into the liquid. Do this a few times until the centre is soft (using about a quarter of the flour). Leave to rise for 15 minutes.

Knead the rest of the flour into the dough, kneading for at least 5 minutes. Cover with a clean tea towel and leave to rise for 1-1½ hours, until doubled in size. Knock down the dough and knead again for 1-2 minutes. Divide the dough into four pieces and roll out into 5mm thick rounds ready for the toppings.

4 takes on VEGETARIAN PIZZAS



Cherry tomato and Asiago pizza *Pizza con pomodorini e Asiago*

MAKES 4 PIZZAS

❁ Preparation
15 minutes,
plus resting

❁ Cooking
15-20 minutes

1 quantity of basic dough (see page 57)

400g cherry tomatoes
400g mild Asiago cheese, grated
extra-virgin olive oil
a handful of dried thyme

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Cut the tomatoes into halves or quarters and arrange equally over the pizza bases. Top with some grated Asiago cheese, a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil and a sprinkling of dried thyme. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes, until the dough is crisp and the cheese golden.



Goats' cheese and pesto pizza with salad leaves *Pizza con formaggio di capra, pesto e insalata*

MAKES 4 PIZZAS

❁ Preparation
15 minutes,
plus resting

❁ Cooking
15-20 minutes

1 quantity of basic dough (see page 57)

250ml smooth tomato passata
250g mozzarella, torn
250g goats' cheese, sliced widthways
a handful of small salad leaves
2-3 tbsp basil pesto
oregano

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Spread a couple of spoonfuls of passata over each pizza base and use the back of a spoon to coat the base evenly to within 1cm of the edge. Top each base with a mix of goats' cheese and mozzarella, then sprinkle with oregano. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes.

Remove the pizzas from the oven, top with a handful of salad leaves and drizzle a tablespoon of pesto over the top. Serve immediately.



Cherry tomato,
black olives and
Gorgonzola pizza
*Pizza con pomodorini,
olive e Gorgonzola*

MAKES 4 PIZZAS

✿ Preparation
15 minutes,
plus resting

✿ Cooking
15-20 minutes

1 quantity of basic dough (see page 57)

250g cherry tomatoes
200g black olives, pitted
250g mild Gorgonzola
oregano

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Cut the cherry tomatoes in half and scatter over the top of the pizza bases along with the olives. Top with the Gorgonzola cheese and a sprinkling of oregano. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes, until the dough is crisp and the cheese golden.



Fig, mascarpone and
almond pizza
*Pizza con fichi,
mascarpone e mandorle*

MAKES 4 PIZZAS

✿ Preparation
15 minutes,
plus resting

✿ Cooking
15-20 minutes

1 quantity of basic dough (see page 57)

6 large figs
250g mascarpone cheese
100g toasted almonds
2-3 tbsp runny honey

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Spread a few spoonfuls of mascarpone over the surface of each pizza base. Slice the figs into 3mm slices and arrange these on top of the mascarpone. Bake the pizzas in the oven for 15-20 minutes.

Remove the pizzas from the oven and sprinkle over the toasted almonds. To finish, drizzle the honey over the top of the pizza and serve hot.

A Zizzi exclusive

High-street Italian restaurant chain Zizzi has created **three unique pizzas** exclusively for *Taste Italia Collection*. Read on to try them yourself...

At Zizzi restaurants, Italian chefs source the best Italian ingredients to use in genuine Italian recipes. Zizzi pizzas are made to order using hand-stretched dough, and their Rustica pizzas are bigger, thinner and crispier, which means more room for toppings. Visit www.zizzi.co.uk or learn how to create your own Zizzi-inspired pizzas throughout the next couple of pages.

Half and half pizza *Pizza due gusti*

SERVES 2 ❀ Preparation 20 minutes ❀ Cooking 30 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see below)

250g new potatoes

80ml double cream

1 tsp dried rosemary

30g Grana Padano, grated

150g fior di latte mozzarella, torn

½ a fresh chilli, sliced

10g wild rocket

230g tin of crushed tomatoes

300g Italian sausages, skin removed, flesh broken up

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Cook the potatoes in a pan of boiling water, then remove, leave to cool and peel off the skin. Finely slice, then return to the pan and cover with double cream. Season to taste.

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7. Roll the dough out on a lightly floured surface into a large rectangle, then transfer to an oiled baking sheet. Spread the crushed tomatoes over one half of the pizza, cover the whole pizza with fior di latte mozzarella, then add the potatoes, Grana Padano and rosemary to the white side. On the red side, scatter the sausages and chilli. Bake in the oven for about 20 minutes. Garnish with rocket and black pepper to serve.

Italian Basics

BASIC PIZZA DOUGH RECIPE

200g plain flour

a pinch of salt

10g fresh yeast (if not available, use half the quantity of dried yeast and follow the packet instructions)

90ml lukewarm water, adding more if required

Sift the flour and salt into a mound and make a well in the centre. Mash the yeast in the water until smooth, then pour into the well. Work with your fingers to make a soft dough. Knead well until the dough becomes smooth and elastic. Shape into a ball, place in a bowl and cover. Leave to rise for about 2 hours, until almost doubled in size.



© Zizzi, www.zizzi.co.uk





Wholemeal pizza *Pizza integrale*

SERVES 2 ❀ Preparation 15 minutes ❀ Cooking 20 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough using wholemeal flour instead of white flour (see page 60 for recipe)

150g buffalo mozzarella, torn into small pieces

200g baby plum or cherry tomatoes, cut in half, seasoned with salt, pepper and a few leaves of torn basil leaves, then coated in extra-virgin olive oil

230g tin of crushed tomatoes

3 slices of prosciutto crudo

15g wild rocket

2 sprigs of basil

**salt and freshly ground black pepper
extra-virgin olive oil**

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7. Roll the dough out on a lightly floured surface into a large rectangle, then transfer to an oiled baking sheet. Spread the tin of crushed tomatoes over the top, then season and bake in the oven for about 20 minutes, until golden.

Take the pizza out of the oven, add the baby plum tomatoes, basil, rocket, and buffalo mozzarella. Season with salt and pepper, then top with the prosciutto and finish with a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil.





Seafood pizza

Pizza pescatora

SERVES 2 ❀ Preparation 20 minutes ❀ Cooking 35 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 60)
 400g fresh mussels
 400g fresh clams
 8 king prawns
 1 squid (tube)
 150g smoked salmon
 150g plum tomatoes, peeled, seeds removed, flesh chopped
 230g tin of crushed tomatoes
 2 tbsp dried oregano
 extra-virgin olive oil
 10g wild rocket

½ a lemon, cut into wedges
 for the dressing

chop together 4 sprigs of flat-leaf parsley, 1 garlic clove and a pinch of salt, then cover with olive oil

Add the mussels and clams to a large pan along with a drizzle of oil and 2 tsbp oregano. Cover the pan and cook until the shells are open, discarding any shells that remain closed.

Butterfly the prawns and cut the squid into large squares. Place them in a pan with a drizzle of oil and cook for about 5 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7. Roll the dough out on a lightly floured surface into a large rectangle and transfer to an oiled baking sheet.

Spread the crushed tomatoes over the surface of the dough, scatter with the chopped tomatoes, then season. Bake in the oven for about 20 minutes, until golden. Take the pizza out of the oven, add the prawns, squid, mussels and clams (some with, some without the shells), and place back in the oven for 3 minutes. Finish with rocket, smoked salmon and the parsley and garlic dressing. Serve with lemon wedges.

Direct from Naples

Ben Riccio pays tribute to the home of pizza with a selection of six Neapolitan recipes, from the classic to the more unusual.



Sausage and onion pizza

Salsiccia e cipolla

MAKES A 30CM PIZZA

❖ Preparation 15 minutes

❖ Cooking 25 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

1 tsp olive oil, plus extra for brushing

1 onion, peeled, sliced

150g Italian sausage, sliced

100g mozzarella, torn

Preheat the oven to its highest temperature for 1 hour. Oil a 30cm pizza tray, roll out the dough, then using your fingers spread the dough evenly over the base of the tray. You can use a pizza stone if you have one.

Brush the pizza dough with a little olive oil. Heat 1 tsp olive oil in a pan, add the onion slices and sausage, then leave to cook for around 2 minutes.

Remove from the pan and arrange on top of the pizza, then scatter with mozzarella. Cook the pizza in the oven for about 15-20 minutes, until ready.

TIP Although it is not difficult to make pizza at home, it does take a little time to arrive at the finished product, due to the resting and rising process required in preparing the dough. Alternatively, you can use commercially prepared pizza bases, but cooking times may vary so check with the packet instructions before cooking. Pre-prepared bases are convenient, but the beautifully cooked pizza you will achieve from homemade dough really is worth all the effort.



Potato pizza

Pizza patata

MAKES A 30CM PIZZA ❖ Preparation 20 minutes ❖ Cooking 35 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

1 tsp olive oil

150g potatoes, boiled and sliced

1 onion, peeled, sliced

100g mozzarella, torn

a sprig of rosemary

50g Parmesan, grated

salt

Preheat the oven to its highest temperature for 1 hour. Oil a 30cm pizza tray, roll out the

dough, then using your fingers spread the dough evenly over the base of the tray. Alternatively, you could use a pizza stone if you have one.

Brush the dough with olive oil, then top with the sliced potatoes and onion. Sprinkle mozzarella over the top, then add rosemary and salt to taste. Finish with a scattering of grated Parmesan. Cook the pizza in the oven for about 15-20 minutes.



Four cheese pizza *Quattro formaggi*

MAKES A 30CM PIZZA

✿ Preparation 20 minutes

✿ Cooking 20 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

2 tbsp olive oil

150g mozzarella, shredded

50g Gorgonzola, chopped

100g bocconcini or Scamorza, sliced

50g Parmesan, grated

Preheat the oven to its highest temperature for 1 hour. Oil a 30cm pizza tray, roll out the dough, then using your fingers spread the dough evenly over the base of the tray. Alternatively, you could use a pizza stone if you have one.

Brush the pizza dough with a little olive oil. Sprinkle the mozzarella over the pizza base, then top with Gorgonzola and sliced bocconcini. Finish off with a scattering of grated Parmesan. Cook the pizza in the oven for about 15-20 minutes, until ready.

TIP High-fat mozzarella is preferable to use on pizzas as it resists high oven temperatures. Low-fat mozzarella can be used if you wish. To avoid overpowering the other ingredients with the mozzarella flavour, I recommend using only a little.

Also, I like to prepare a mixture of olive oil and crushed garlic in a bowl, then leave it to infuse. Prior to placing the pizza in the oven, I sprinkle this mixture lightly over the top to give extra flavour to the beautifully cooked pizza. Olive oil alone can be used if you prefer.

Street urchin pizza *Scugnizzo*

MAKES A 30CM PIZZA ✿ Preparation 20 minutes ✿ Cooking 20 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil

150g peeled and crushed tomatoes, fresh or tinned

100g mozzarella, torn

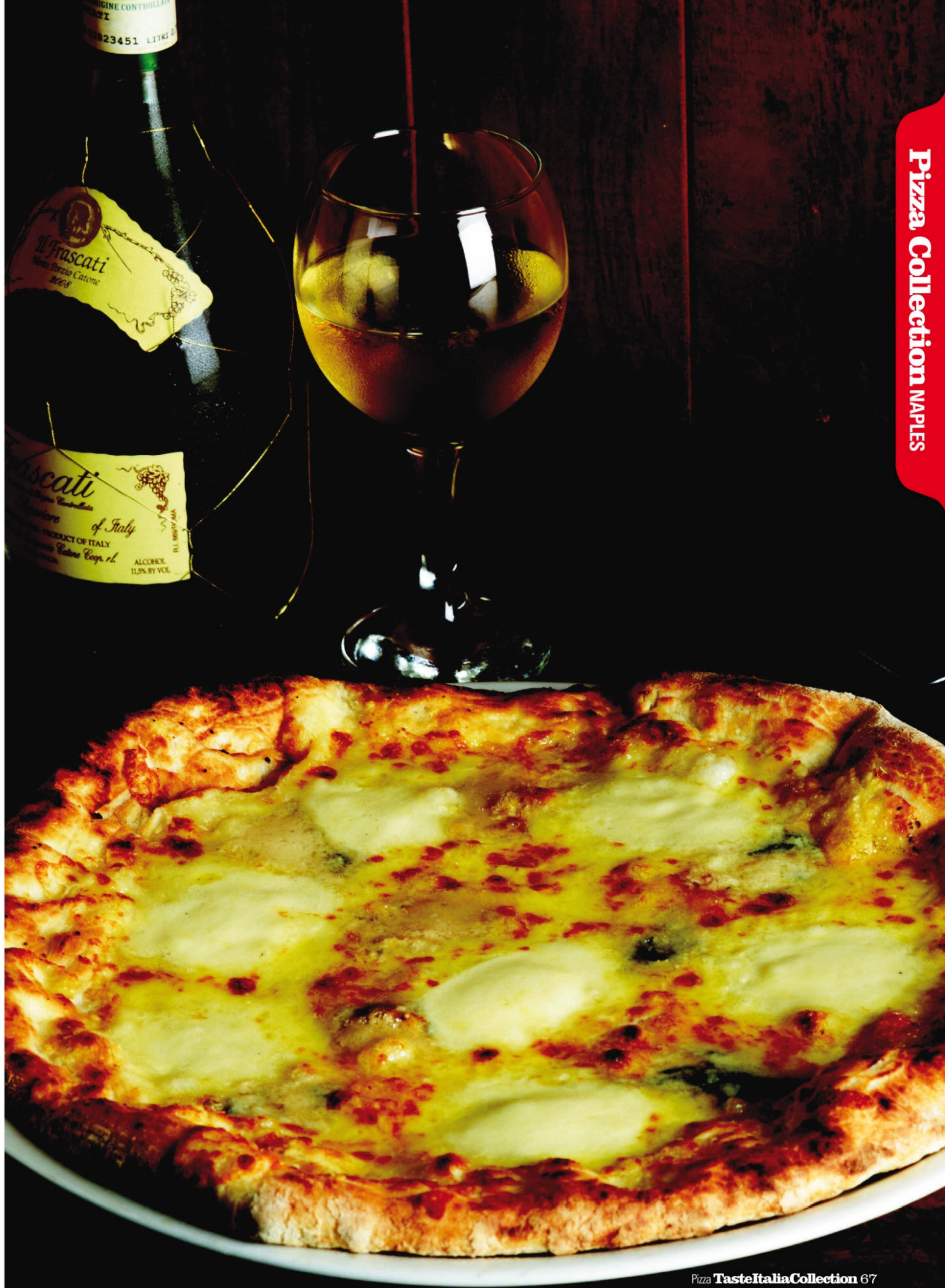
a slice of shoulder ham, cut into 4 pieces

7 slices of hot salami

Preheat the oven to its highest temperature for 1 hour. Oil a 30cm pizza tray, roll out the dough, then using your fingers spread the dough evenly over the base of the tray. Alternatively, you could use a pizza stone if you have one.

Using a spoon, spread the crushed tomatoes over the surface of the dough, leaving a 1cm border around the edge. Scatter the mozzarella over the tomatoes, then top with sliced ham. Place the salami slices evenly over the pizza and transfer to the oven to cook for about 15-20 minutes.

TIP I like to use Ventricina salami to make this pizza, which is available from most delicatessens, but any hot salami will work well.



Pizza Collection NAPLES



Nutella pizza

Pizza nutella

MAKES A 30CM PIZZA

❖ *Preparation 20 minutes*

❖ *Cooking 10 minutes*

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

100g Nutella or other hazelnut spread

10 strawberries, cut in half

1 tsp icing sugar, to sprinkle

Preheat the oven to its highest temperature for 1 hour. Oil a 30cm pizza tray, roll out the dough, then using your fingers spread the dough evenly over the base of the tray. Alternatively, you could use a pizza stone if you have one.

Cook the pizza in the oven for about 10 minutes.

Remove from the oven and using a spoon spread the Nutella or hazelnut spread all over the pizza. Top with strawberries and sprinkle with icing sugar to serve.

TIP A pizza stone can be used in the oven to cook pizza – it will produce a more authentic, traditional tasting pizza. Taste will vary between pizza cooked in a tray and pizza cooked on a pizza stone, so try both and see which you prefer. When using a tray, always brush the tray with oil before extending the dough with your hands onto the tray.

❖ **READER OFFER**

Readers can buy *Pizza From Naples* by Ben Riccio (published by New Holland, RRP £15.99), with a 25 per cent discount and free UK p&p. To order, please visit www.newhollandpublishers.com and enter code 'taste italia' at the checkout. Offer ends 31 August 2011.



Carnival pizza

Pizza Carnevale

MAKES A 30CM PIZZA ❖ *Preparation 20 minutes* ❖ *Cooking 25 minutes*

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

150g peeled and crushed tomatoes, fresh or tinned

100g mozzarella, torn

1 slice of shoulder ham, cut into quarters

100g mushrooms, sliced

2 tbsp olive oil

70g green or red bell pepper, seeds and core removed, sliced

6 black olives, pitted

2 anchovy fillets in oil, cut into pieces

Preheat the oven to its highest temperature for 1 hour. Oil a 30cm pizza tray, roll out the dough, then using your fingers spread the

dough evenly over the base of the tray. Alternatively, you could use a pizza stone if you have one.

Using a spoon, spread the crushed tomatoes over the surface of the dough, leaving a 1cm border around the edge. Sprinkle the mozzarella on top, then add the ham and mushrooms.

Heat the oil in a pan and cook the pepper strips for 2 minutes. Remove from the pan and place on top of the pizza. Finish with the whole black olives and anchovies. Cook the pizza in the oven for 15-20 minutes.

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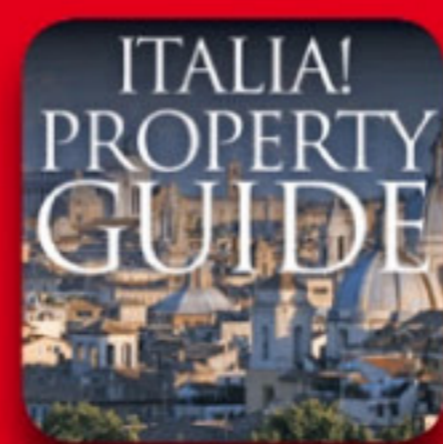
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Simply Strada

Learn how to make restaurant-quality pizza with the help of Strada's Development Chef **Maurice Maffeo**.

Smoked salmon pizza

Pizza al salmone affumicato

MAKES 1 PIZZA ❖ Preparation 10 minutes ❖ Cooking 10 minutes

- 1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)
- ½ quantity of pizza sauce (see page 33)
- 100g mozzarella, grated
- 15g baby spinach
- 100g sliced smoked salmon
- a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 lemon wedge
- a twist of freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 9. Stretch the dough out to form a large round or square pizza, depending on the shape of your tray. Lightly oil a baking tray and place the pizza on top. Ladle the pizza sauce evenly over the surface but not to the edge, leaving roughly a 5mm border. Spread the grated mozzarella over the top and transfer to the oven to cook until golden and crisp.

Wash and drain the spinach. When ready, remove the pizza from the oven and transfer to a warm plate. Add the baby spinach and smoked salmon, then drizzle with olive oil and a squeeze of lemon juice. Finish with a twist of pepper to serve.



Salami pizza

Pizza salame

MAKES 1 PIZZA ❀ Preparation 15 minutes ❀ Cooking 20 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)
125g mozzarella, grated
50g mascarpone cheese
6-8 slices of salami, any salami can be used, for example: Finocchiona (with fennel), Ventricina Piccante (spicy), or Napoli (with black pepper)
8-10 sun-blush tomatoes
2 artichoke hearts from a jar
15 rocket leaves
a pinch of freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 9. Drain the artichoke hearts, then cut into quarters and heat in a hot frying pan with a little oil and some salt and pepper. Allow the artichokes to get some golden colour on the side facing the pan, then gently turn over to colour on the other side. Remove from the pan once ready.

Stretch the dough out to form a round or square pizza depending on the shape of your baking tray. Lightly oil a baking tray and place the stretched dough on top.

Scatter the grated mozzarella over the dough, then spoon the mascarpone evenly over the top. Add the salame slices, cut in half if large. Transfer to the oven and cook until golden and crisp.

Wash and drain the rocket. Once the pizza is ready, remove from the oven and transfer to a warm plate. Add the sun-blush tomatoes, artichokes and rocket, then drizzle with the oil from the sun-blush tomatoes. Finish with a twist of freshly ground black pepper.



Valtellina pizza

Pizza valtellina

MAKES 1 PIZZA ❀ Preparation 15 minutes ❀ Cooking 10 minutes

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 36)

½ quantity of pizza sauce (see page 33)

100g mozzarella, grated

60g ricotta

5 slices of Bresaola

15 rocket leaves

a drizzle of garlic oil (1 finely chopped garlic clove mixed with 30ml olive oil)

a pinch of freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 9.

Stretch the dough ball out to form a round

or square pizza depending on the shape of your baking tray. Lightly oil a baking tray and place the stretched dough on top.

Ladle the pizza sauce evenly over the surface of the dough, but not quite to the edge, leaving a 5mm gap. Spread the grated mozzarella over the sauce and spoon the ricotta evenly over the top using a small spoon. Transfer the pizza to the oven and cook until golden and crisp.

Wash and drain the rocket. When the pizza is ready, remove from the oven and transfer

to a warm plate. Add the Bresaola and rocket leaves to the pizza, then drizzle with the garlic oil. Finish with a twist of black pepper to serve.

TIP Make sure the plate is warm when you put the pizza on it to stop condensation, which makes the pizza soggy. For more tips, and to see a video demonstration of a pizza being made visit www.strada.co.uk



A winter feast for the senses

Ursula Ferrigno puts the fresh flavours of winter vegetables to good use in six warming pizza recipes that the whole family will adore.

© Photography Scott Morrison, Food styling Kay Deakin

Naples was at its height in the 1750s, full of Bourbon wealth and spirit, and also pizza. Street vendors bought pizzas from small stands and roamed the city selling slices from a *tavolino*, a narrow board. The stands made pizza to order with a selection of simple seasonal ingredients scattered over the top, including the newly discovered tomato. In 1830, Antica Pizzeria Port'Alba – the first pizzeria – opened in the heart of Naples. It quickly became a meeting place for the man in the street. For those who could afford it there were pizzas topped with fresh shellfish and seafood, buffalo mozzarella and cured meats. But because so many of the patrons were artists, students or workers, the common pizza was seasoned simply with oil and garlic. The pizzeria even developed a system of payment called *'pizza a olto'* – eat now, pay eight days later.

Pizza is a great dish to enjoy all year round, but I think it takes on a life of its own in the winter. One of my favourite ingredients to top pizzas is the simple mushroom, and there are plenty of different varieties available at this time of year. Throughout the following pages I've also included aubergines, artichokes and shallots. I hope you enjoy.

Ursula Ferrigno

is an acclaimed Italian baker and cook. She was formerly a principal tutor at Cordon Vert and now runs cookery classes. She is the author of several books about Italian cuisine, including *Trattoria, La Dolce Vita, Bringing Italy Home* and *Complete Italian Cookery Course*.

Ursula Ferrigno

Mint pesto and aubergine pizza
recipe on page 76





Mint pesto and aubergine pizza

Pizza con pesto di mentha fresca e melanzane

SERVES 2-4
 ✦ Preparation
 40 minutes
 ✦ Cooking
 30 minutes

This pizza has a Byzantine flavour from southern Italy, which I love. In Sicily, the cooking is very different in style to the rest of Italy. There is a hint of Greek and a lot of North African influence.

- ½ a quantity of pizza dough (see page 18)
- a handful of chopped fresh mint, plus sprigs to garnish
- 50g pine nuts
- 50g Parmesan, grated
- 1 small garlic clove, peeled
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- ½ a small aubergine
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 250g mozzarella, sliced

To make the mint pesto, put the mint, pine nuts, Parmesan, garlic and 2 tbsp oil in a mortar and using the pestle, grind until the mixture resembles a paste.

Slice the aubergine into thin rounds. Put the slices in a colander, sprinkle with salt, cover and weigh down. Leave for about 30 minutes. Rinse the slices and pat dry with absorbent kitchen paper. Heat the remaining 1 tbsp oil in a frying pan and fry the aubergine slices until lightly golden on both sides.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough very thinly into a round. Place on an oiled baking sheet. Spread a generous layer of pesto onto the pizza base, then arrange the mozzarella and aubergine slices on top. Season with salt and pepper, then add the remaining pesto. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes, until golden and bubbling.

TIP If you don't have a pestle and mortar you can prepare the mint pesto in a food processor or blender. Simply blend the ingredients together until very creamy.

Shallot pizza

Pizza con cipolline

SERVES 2-4
 ✦ Preparation
 10 minutes
 ✦ Cooking
 50 minutes

The marriage of the shallots and cheeses combine well here to produce a delicious pizza. I like to roast the shallots in their skins, which gives them a delicious, caramelised flavour. In Italy, they often boil the shallots and then skin them. You can use pickling onions instead of shallots, although they have slightly different flavours.

- ½ a quantity of pizza dough (see page 18)
- 500g shallots
- 250g mozzarella, grated
- 75g Dolcelatte cheese, sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- a small handful of chopped fresh thyme
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Put the whole shallots in a roasting tin. Roast in the oven for around 30 minutes, until they feel soft. When cooked, skin the shallots, then cut them into quarters.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pizza dough very thinly into a round. Place on an oiled baking sheet.

Brush the pizza base with oil. Add the shallots and trickle over the vinegar. Add the Dolcelatte, then sprinkle over the mozzarella and thyme. Season with salt and pepper. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes, until golden and bubbling.

TIP For added flavour, the shallots can be skinned and quartered, then lightly fried in olive oil. Sprinkle with balsamic vinegar and leave overnight.



Shallot pizza
recipe opposite

Gorgonzola and artichoke
mini pizzas
recipe opposite



SERVES 2-4

✿ Preparation
10 minutes
✿ Cooking
35 minutes



Gorgonzola and artichoke mini pizza

Pizzetta di gorgonzola e carciofi

MAKES 6 MINI PIZZAS

✿ Preparation
10 minutes
✿ Cooking
35 minutes

This pizza is very versatile as it can be served hot straight from the oven or cold for a picnic. Canned artichokes are a great storecupboard stand-by and a lot more convenient than cooking them from fresh. In this recipe I roast them before arranging them over mozzarella and Gorgonzola cheeses.

1 quantity of pizza dough (see page 18)
6 artichoke hearts from a jar, cut into quarters
3 tbsp olive oil
150g mozzarella, grated
150g Gorgonzola, sliced
3 tbsp grated Parmesan
1 tbsp toasted pine nuts
1 tsp finely chopped fresh sage
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Rinse the artichoke hearts well, pat dry, then put in a small roasting tin. Drizzle with the oil and roast in the oven for 10 minutes, until golden.

Divide the pizza dough into 6 balls. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each ball very thinly into a small round. Place on oiled baking sheets.

Divide the mozzarella, Gorgonzola and artichoke hearts over the pizza bases. Sprinkle over the Parmesan, pine nuts and sage, then season with salt and pepper. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, until golden and bubbling.

TIP Always rinse preserved artichoke hearts well to remove any hint of saltiness.

Chargrilled vegetable pizza

Pizza con verdure grigliate

This pizza is a lovely combination of flavours and colours. While the dough is rising and resting you can grill the courgette and aubergines, then skin and chop the tomatoes. The rocket adds a lovely peppery flavour and softens gently with the heat of the topping.

½ a quantity of pizza dough (see page 18)
1 medium courgette
1 medium aubergine
4 tbsp olive oil
8 tomatoes
salt and freshly ground black pepper
100g mozzarella, sliced
a handful of fresh basil leaves, torn
a handful of rocket leaves

Cut the courgette lengthways into 7.5cm slices. Cut the aubergine lengthways into 10cm slices. Brush the courgette and aubergine lengths with some of the oil and grill under a medium heat for 4-5 minutes on each side.

Put the tomatoes in a bowl, cover with boiling water for about 40 seconds, then plunge into cold water. Using a sharp knife, peel off the skins. Chop the flesh and season well.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pizza dough very thinly into a round. Place on an oiled baking sheet.

Brush the pizza base with the remaining oil, then sprinkle over the basil. Add the chopped tomatoes, then arrange the aubergine, courgette and cheese slices on top.

Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes until golden and bubbling. Finally arrange the rocket on top of the pizza and serve.

Chargrilled vegetable pizza
recipe on page 79

Pizza Norcina
recipe on page 82





Pizza Norcina

Pizza Norcina

SERVES 2-4

✿ Preparation
25 minutes

✿ Cooking
30 minutes

I first enjoyed this pizza in Norcina, Umbria, when I was on a truffle-hunting trip. It was so good that I returned the following day for another.

½ a quantity of pizza dough (see page 18)

200g dried sliced porcini mushrooms or a combination of porcini and fresh flat mushrooms

250g mozzarella, grated

2 tbsp olive oil

1 garlic clove, peeled, crushed

salt and freshly ground black pepper

½ tsp dried basil

½ tsp dried thyme

Soak the porcini in a bowl of warm water for about 20 minutes to reconstitute. Slice the fresh mushrooms.

Drain the porcini and pat dry. Heat the oil in a medium frying pan, add the porcini and fresh mushrooms, and fry until softened. Add the garlic, salt and pepper.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pizza dough very thinly into a round. Place on an oiled baking sheet.

Top the pizza base with the mushrooms and mozzarella, then sprinkle over the dried basil and thyme.

Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, until golden and bubbling. Serve immediately.

Pizza with goats' cheese, thyme and walnut oil

Pizza con formaggio di capra, timo e olio di noci

SERVES 2-4

✿ Preparation
10 minutes

✿ Cooking
35 minutes

I usually buy a wedge of a hard goats' cheese from a local deli, but I sometimes get the round, soft, pre-packed ones from the supermarket. The garlic is simmered in water until it is soft, which makes the flavour more subtle.

½ a quantity of pizza dough (see page 18)

4 garlic cloves, peeled

4 plum tomatoes, sliced

175g soft goats' cheese, sliced

50g pine nuts

3 tbsp walnut oil

salt and freshly ground black pepper

a handful of fresh thyme, chopped

Put the garlic cloves in a small saucepan, cover with water and simmer for 10-15 minutes, until soft.

Meanwhile, toast the pine nuts under the grill, turning them frequently. When the garlic cloves are soft, drain and, using a fork, mash into a purée.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pizza dough very thinly into a round. Place on an oiled baking sheet.

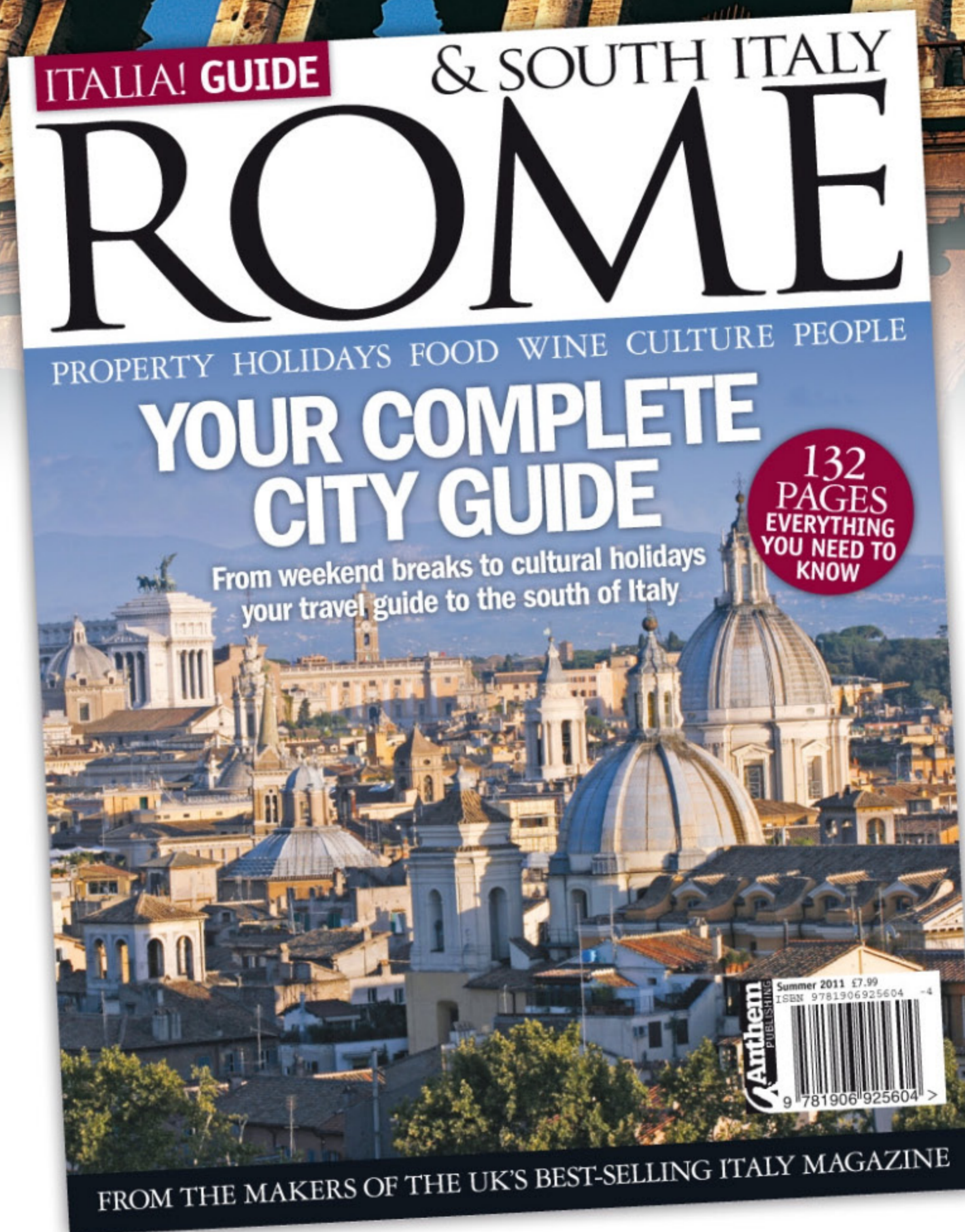
Sprinkle the rolled out dough with half of the walnut oil. Arrange the sliced tomatoes on the pizza and dot with the garlic purée. Arrange the cheese slices on top. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, the remaining oil and the pine nuts.

Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, until golden and bubbling. Serve sprinkled with chopped thyme.

Pizza with goats' cheese,
thyme and walnut oil
recipe opposite



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Pizza variations

As pizza grew in popularity **variations began to appear**, such as the folded *calzone* and the rolled *stromboli*. Here we show you how to get creative with your dough and put a twist on tradition...



Getting creative with calzone

The invention of the classic folded pizza calzone led to many different double crusted varieties being developed. Here **Maxine Clark** explores the options...



Oozing cheese pizza *Pizza con formaggio*

MAKES A 30CM PIZZA ✿ Preparation 40 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 15 minutes

This amazing filled pizza features the reverse of dimpling – cobbles, which ooze cheese when they are cut open. The pastry is made with olive oil and has no yeast in it, and the secret is to roll out the pastry very thinly so that it cooks quickly and hasn't got time to absorb the melting cheese. The breadcrumbs are there to absorb any whey escaping from the cheese.

250g Italian '00' flour

100ml warm water

3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to glaze

5 balls of cow's milk mozzarella (fior di latte), or a smoked mozzarella, which will be firmer

6 tbsp dried breadcrumbs

sea salt

First, make an unleavened dough by mixing the flour, warm water and olive oil together, adding more warm water, if necessary. Knead the dough well until smooth and elastic, then place in a bowl, cover, and leave to rest for 1 hour.

Put a pizza stone or large, heavy baking sheet on the lower shelf of the oven.

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7 for at least 30 minutes.

Divide the dough into two pieces, making one piece slightly larger than the other. Using plenty of flour for dusting, roll the larger piece out as thinly as you can into a 30cm circle directly onto some non-stick baking parchment, then slide the paper onto a rimless baking sheet.

Cut the mozzarella balls in half and lightly squeeze out any moisture. Dip the bases in the dried breadcrumbs, then arrange the cheese, domed-side up, over the pastry, adding any remaining breadcrumbs underneath each one.

Roll out the remaining dough as thinly as you can, making sure it is slightly larger than the base. Lift this over the cheese

mounds and gently press the dough down and around each piece of cheese. The blunt edge of a biscuit cutter will help you to seal the edge of each mound – use a cutter that fits just around the mound. Make sure there are no holes for the cheese to run through. Twist and crimp the edges of the pizza together, then carefully brush with olive oil and sprinkle with salt.

Working quickly, open the oven door and slide the baking paper and pizza onto the hot stone or baking sheet. Bake in the oven for 10-15 minutes or until golden, then remove from the oven and serve.



Calzone parmigiana-style *Calzone alla Parmigiana*

MAKES 4 CALZONE ✿ Preparation 45 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 1 hour

This is a good calzone to make if you're cooking for more than two people. The filling ingredients can be chopped as finely or roughly as you like, but the aubergine must be cooked through before it goes into the dough. I sometimes add a couple of tablespoons of pizza sauce to the mixture to make it extra tomatoey.

1 quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 18), up to the first rising

2 aubergines, cut into cubes

12 garlic cloves, peeled

4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to glaze

200g buffalo mozzarella or cow's milk mozzarella (fior di latte)

5 ripe tomatoes, cut into cubes

3 tbsp chopped basil

4 tbsp grated Parmesan

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put two large, heavy baking sheets into the oven. Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6 for at least 30 minutes.

Uncover the dough, punch out the air and divide into four balls. Dredge with flour and

leave to rise on floured baking parchment for about 20 minutes, until soft and puffy.

Meanwhile, toss the aubergine and garlic cloves with the olive oil in a roasting tin and roast for 20 minutes.

Lightly squeeze any excess moisture out of the mozzarella, then cut it into cubes. Remove the roasting tin from the oven and leave to cool for 10 minutes before stirring in the tomatoes, mozzarella and basil. Season to taste.

Roll or pull the risen balls of dough into 20cm circles directly onto two sheets of non-stick baking parchment. Slide these onto two rimless baking sheets. Spread a quarter of the vegetable mixture over one half of each calzone, leaving a 1cm border around the edge for sealing. Season well. Fold the uncovered half of the dough over

the filling. Pinch and twist the edges firmly together so that the filling doesn't escape during cooking. Brush with olive oil and sprinkle with Parmesan.

Working quickly, open the oven door and slide the paper and calzone onto the hot baking sheets. Bake in the oven for around 30 minutes, until the crust is puffed up and golden. Remove from the oven and leave to stand for 2-3 minutes before serving to allow the filling to cool slightly. Serve either hot or warm.

Aubergine and tuna double-crust pizza

Scacciata

MAKES A 25CM PIZZA ✿ Preparation 40 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 1 hour

This magnificent double-crust pizza is filled with Sicilian bounty – aubergines, tomatoes, tuna and basil. The breadcrumbs between the layers soak up the juices and keep the filling firm but moist. I have even made this with fresh, boned sardines instead of tuna. Out of season, tinned tuna in oil works very well.

1 quantity of basic calzone dough to the first rising (see page 101)

4 tbsp good-quality basil pesto

4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to glaze

2 aubergines, thinly sliced

55g dried breadcrumbs

55g Pecorino, grated

2 x 150g tuna steaks, sliced horizontally

4 tomatoes, thinly sliced

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put a pizza stone or large, heavy baking sheet on the lower shelf of the oven, then

preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7 for at least 30 minutes. Lightly oil a 25x4cm pizza pan or springform cake tin.

Heat the olive oil in a frying pan and fry the aubergine slices, until golden brown. Drain on kitchen paper. Mix the breadcrumbs with the Pecorino.

Uncover the dough, punch out the air and roll or pull two-thirds of it into a 35cm circle. Use this to line the pizza pan, draping the extra dough over the edge. Arrange the aubergine slices over the base and sprinkle with a quarter of the breadcrumb mixture. Arrange the tuna slices on top, then spread over the pesto. Sprinkle with

another quarter of the breadcrumb mixture. Arrange the tomatoes over the tuna and pesto, then season and sprinkle with another quarter of the breadcrumb mixture. Roll or pull the remaining dough into a 27cm circle. Brush the edge of the dough with a little water. Lay the circle of dough over the pizza and press the edges to seal. Trim off the excess dough with a sharp knife. Brush the top with olive oil and sprinkle with the remaining breadcrumb mixture. Make two slashes in the centre of the pizza to allow steam to escape during cooking. Bake in the oven for 35-45 minutes, until golden. Serve warm or cold.

Recipe © Maxine Clark, Photography © Richard Jung



Potato and mozzarella calzone *Calzone di patate e mozzarella*

MAKES A 25-35CM CALZONE ✿ Preparation 40 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 40 minutes

In Naples, this is known as 'filled pizza' or *pizza ripieno*, but the word calzone literally means 'trouser leg' as it was said that the shape was reminiscent of the traditional everyday dress of the street – a sort of tapered pantaloon.

½ a quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 18), making just one ball

50-75g buffalo mozzarella or cow's milk mozzarella (fior di latte)

200g potatoes, peeled, very thinly sliced

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to glaze

1 garlic clove, peeled, finely chopped

1 tbsp chopped fresh rosemary

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put a pizza stone or a large, heavy baking sheet on the lower shelf of the oven.

Preheat the oven to 220°C/ Gas Mark 7 for at least 30 minutes.

Lightly squeeze any excess moisture out of the mozzarella, then cut it into cubes. Toss the sliced potato with the olive oil, garlic and rosemary, then add the mozzarella.

Uncover the dough, punch out the air, and roll or pull into a 25cm circle directly onto non-stick baking parchment. Slide this onto a pizza peel or rimless baking sheet. Spread one half of the calzone with the potato mixture, leaving a 1cm border around the edge for sealing. Season well. Fold the uncovered half of the dough over the filling. Pinch and twist the edges together so that the filling doesn't escape during cooking.

Working quickly, open the oven door and slide the baking paper and calzone onto the

hot stone or baking sheet. If you are brave, try to shoot the calzone into the oven so that it leaves the paper behind – this does take a bit of practice!

Bake in the oven for 10 minutes, then carefully slide out the baking parchment. Bake for a further 25-30 minutes, or until the crust is puffed up and golden. Remove from the oven and brush with a little olive oil. Leave to stand for 2-3 minutes before serving to allow the filling to cool slightly. Serve hot or warm.

Recipe © Maxine Clark, Photography © Richard Jung





Italian sausage, potato and ricotta double-crust sfinciune

Sfinciune al salsicce e patate

MAKES A 30CM DOUBLE-CRUST PIZZA ✿ Preparation 45 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 55 minutes

This double-crust pizza was made famous by the nuns of San Vito lo Capo in Sicily. My version contains ricotta and is a true meat feast. I regularly make it when I am teaching in Sicily. We have a special pizza day when we make doughs and toppings, then head for the farmhouse with its antique bread oven. This is the first pizza we make and we waste no time tucking into it.

1 quantity of basic calzone dough to the first rising (see page 101)

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to glaze

200g potatoes, peeled, finely diced

2 onions, peeled, finely chopped

1 tsp dried oregano

250g fresh Italian sausage, skinned

1 tsp fennel seeds

2 tbsp chopped fresh sage

125g ricotta

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Place a pizza stone or large, heavy baking sheet on the lower shelf of the oven.

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7 for at least 30 minutes.

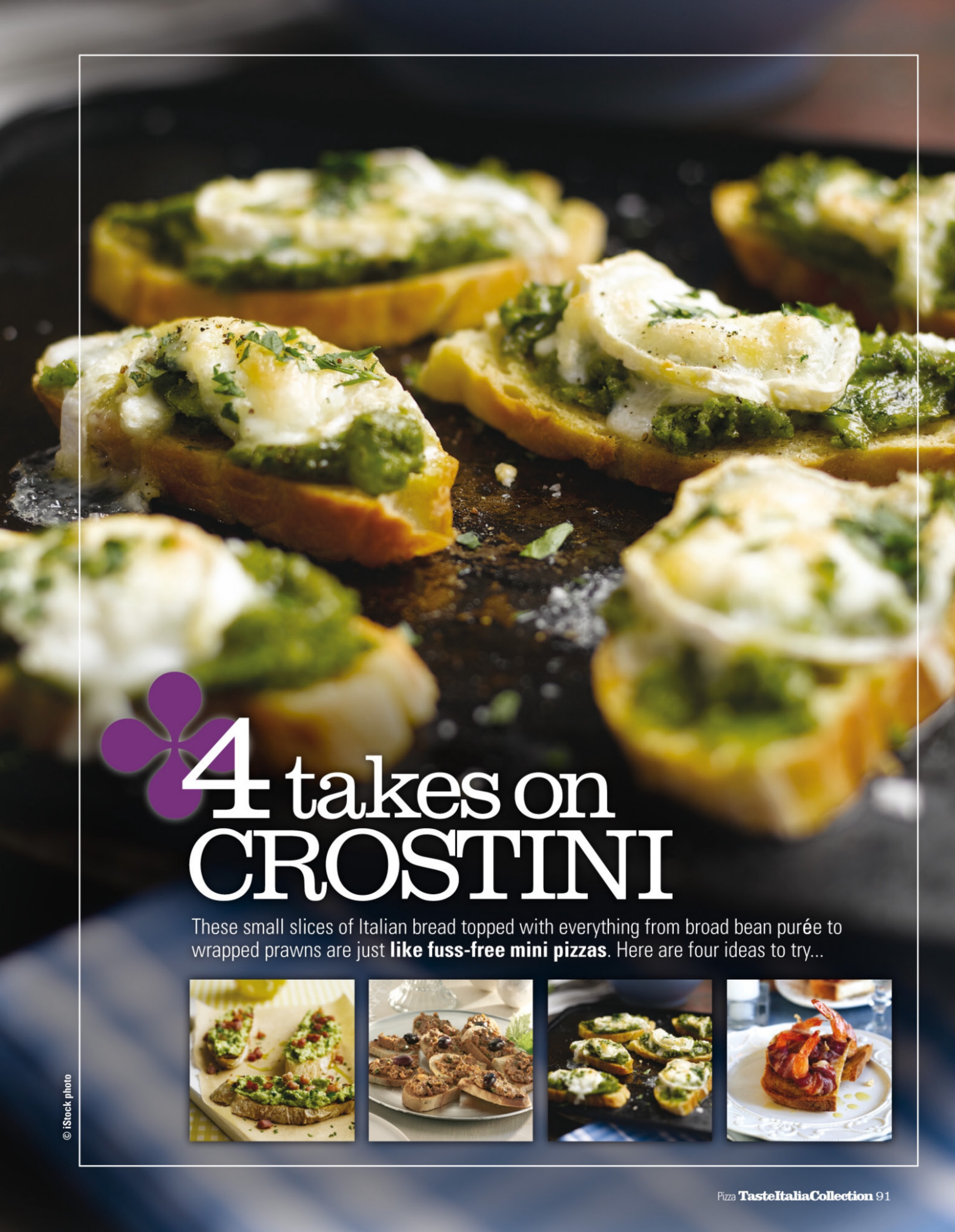
Heat the oil in a frying pan and add the potatoes and onions. Cook for 5-10 minutes, until the onion starts to colour and the potato is soft. Stir in the oregano. Season, then transfer to a bowl to cool.

Fry the sausage briefly in the same frying pan, breaking it up with the back of a fork. Add the fennel seeds and sage to the pan and fry for a couple of minutes – but not too long or the meat will toughen. Season well, then leave to cool.

Uncover the dough, knock out the air and divide into two pieces. Roll each piece into a thin 30cm circle, directly onto a sheet of baking parchment. Spread the potato and onion mixture onto one circle, leaving a 1cm border around the edge. Dot with the sausage and the ricotta. Season, then

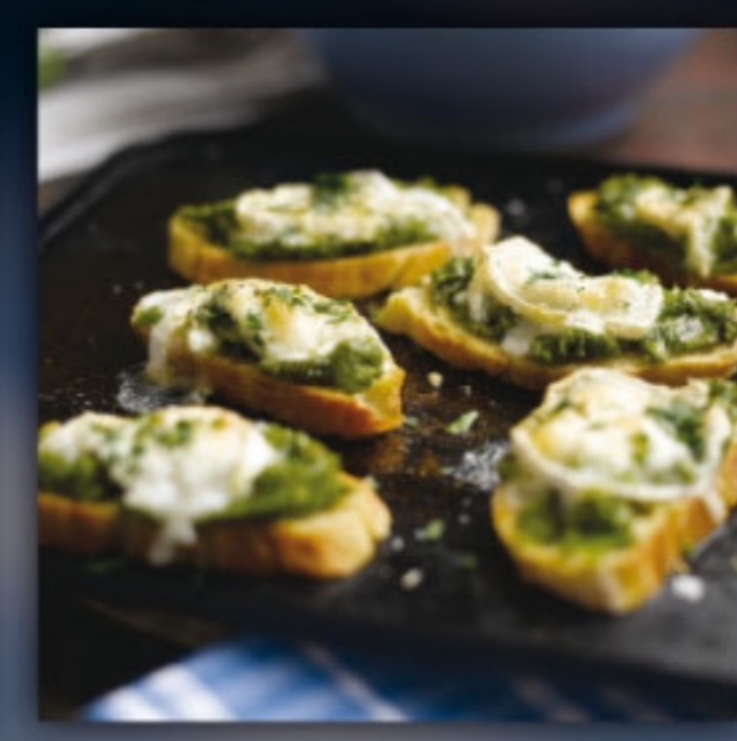
brush the edge of the dough with water and lay the remaining circle on top. Pinch and roll the edges to seal. Brush with a little olive oil. Make two slashes in the centre of the pizza to allow steam to escape during cooking, then carefully slide the paper and pizza onto a rimless baking sheet.

Working quickly, open the oven door and slide the paper and pizza onto the hot stone or baking sheet. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes, then carefully slide out the baking parchment. Bake the pizza for a further 25-30 minutes, or until the crust is puffed up and golden. Remove from the oven and brush with a little oil. Leave to stand for 5 minutes before serving. Eat hot, warm or cold.



4 takes on CROSTINI

These small slices of Italian bread topped with everything from broad bean purée to wrapped prawns are just **like fuss-free mini pizzas**. Here are four ideas to try...



© iStock photo

4 takes on CROSTINI



1

Broad bean purée and pancetta crostini *Crostini di purée di fave con pancetta*

SERVES 6

Preparation
10 minutes

Cooking
15 minutes

1 onion, peeled, chopped
2 tbsp unsalted butter
400g fresh or frozen (defrosted) broad beans, podded
2 tbsp crème fraîche or double cream
salt and freshly ground black pepper
200g pancetta, cut into cubes
12 slices of ciabatta bread, lightly toasted, rubbed with a peeled garlic clove
extra-virgin olive oil, to drizzle
chopped flat-leaf parsley, to garnish

Place the onion and butter together in a frying pan and cook until the onion is soft but not coloured. Add the broad beans and stir together well. Cover the pan and leave to simmer gently until soft, adding a little warm water or stock if necessary to prevent the beans sticking or burning. Meanwhile, heat some oil in a frying pan, add the pancetta cubes and fry until crisp.

Once the beans are softened, remove from the heat, transfer to a bowl and blitz with a hand blender or in a food processor, until smooth. Stir in the crème fraîche, then season to taste with salt and pepper. Spread onto the warm toasted ciabatta and scatter with the fried, crisp pancetta cubes. Serve on a board or platter, drizzled lightly with a little olive oil and a sprinkling of flat-leaf parsley.



2

Liver pâté crostini *Crostini con fegatini alla Toscana*

SERVES 4

Preparation
20 minutes

Cooking
30 minutes

½ an onion, peeled, finely chopped
1 carrot, peeled, finely chopped
1 celery stick, finely chopped
8 slices of ciabatta, lightly toasted
3 tbsp olive oil
40g unsalted butter
1 chicken liver, trimmed and washed carefully
100g calf's liver, trimmed, washed and dried
2 tbsp dry white wine
1 heaped tbsp tomato purée, diluted in 4 tbsp hot water or stock
salt and freshly ground black pepper
25g capers, rinsed, finely chopped

Fry the vegetables together in the olive oil and half of the butter. Cook until soft, then add the livers. Stir and add the wine. Evaporate the wine for about 2 minutes, then add the diluted tomato purée. Season to taste, then add about 2 tbsp water, cover and simmer for about 20 minutes.

Remove from the heat, lift the livers out of the sauce and mince or process them until smooth. Return to the pan and stir in the rest of the butter and all the capers. Heat through, then remove from the heat, but keep warm. Alternatively, cool completely and keep in the refrigerator until required (maximum 3 days) and reheat as necessary. To serve, spread on the toasted ciabatta.



Wild garlic and broad bean crostini with goats' cheese
Crostini di purée di fave e formaggio di capra

SERVES 6

✿ Preparation
20 minutes

✿ Cooking
20 minutes

300g podded broad beans, peeled if the skins are tough (to peel: blanch the podded beans in a saucepan of boiled water for 1 minute, then slip off the inner skins)

8 wild garlic leaves, chopped very finely, or ½ a head of fresh garlic, peeled and chopped very finely

4 tbsp olive oil

salt and freshly ground black pepper

8 small slices of ciabatta or crusty Italian bread, toasted lightly on both sides

100g goats' cheese, sliced

2 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

Boil the broad beans in a saucepan of lightly salted water, until just tender. Drain.

Fry the garlic in a frying pan with half the oil, until just sizzling and softened, but not browned. Add the beans and stir together well. Season the mixture, then cook for about 5 minutes, stirring.

Process or purée the beans, then warm this purée gently in a pan, and season to taste. Once warm, spread the purée on top of the toasted bread. Add a slice of goats' cheese to the top, then place under a preheated grill for 3 minutes, or until just browned. Sprinkle with the parsley and finally drizzle with the remaining oil to serve.



Pancetta-wrapped prawns on crostini
Crostini di code di gamberi arrotolati in pancetta

SERVES 4

✿ Preparation
10 minutes

✿ Cooking
15 minutes

24 tiger or other large prawn tails

24 thin slices of pancetta

12 pieces of sliced rustic bread, such as ciabatta

1 garlic clove, peeled

extra-virgin olive oil

Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. To make the crostini, toast the sliced bread on both sides under the grill. Once browned, remove and rub each slice with the garlic and drizzle with a little olive oil. Set aside.

Devein and peel the prawn tails, then wrap each one in a slice of pancetta. Place the prawns on a baking tray, then bake in the oven for around 10 minutes, or until the pancetta has browned and the prawn tails are cooked. To serve, place two wrapped prawns on top of each crostini and give three slices of crostini to each person.

TIP For even more flavour, try spreading a little fresh avocado over the crostini before adding the pancetta-wrapped prawns.

A tasty twist on tradition

Mario Matassa pushes the boundaries of pizza-making with four creative recipes that make great inspiration for snacks and lunches.



Chicken and courgette folded pizzas *Panzerotti al forno con pollo e zucchini*

SERVES 4-6 ✦ Preparation 15 minutes ✦ Cooking 30 minutes

350g ready-rolled puff pastry
 1 chicken breast, diced
 2 courgettes, trimmed, diced
 1 small bunch of spring onions, finely sliced
 125g mozzarella, chopped into small dice
 grated zest of ½ a lemon
 extra-virgin olive oil
 salt and freshly ground black pepper

Place the olive oil in a large frying pan and add the spring onions. Sauté for a few minutes to soften. Add the chicken and courgettes to the pan and cook for 5-7 minutes, until both the chicken and courgettes are cooked. Season and add the lemon zest. Remove from the heat and allow the mixture to cool slightly.

Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. While the mixture cools, cut out rounds

roughly 6cm in diameter from the puff pastry. Place mounds of the chicken and courgette filling on one half of each round along with a few pieces of mozzarella. Fold the other half over and seal the edges well. Place the pastries on a lined baking tray. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, until brown on top. Serve hot or warm.



Fried pizzas *Pizzette fritte*

SERVES 4 ✿ Preparation 15 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 5 minutes

300g strong plain flour, plus extra to dust

150-180ml tepid water

½ tsp salt

10g fresh yeast

oil, for deep frying

chunky tomato sauce, warmed

**125g mozzarella, finely chopped
oregano**

To make the pizza dough, place the flour on a work surface and mix in the salt. Make a well in the centre and crumble in the yeast. Add the water and knead together for at least 5 minutes. Cover the dough with a clean tea towel and leave to rise for 1 hour, or until doubled in size. After the dough has risen, knock it down and knead again for a minute or two, then divide into 8 even pieces.

Heat the oil in a deep-sided frying pan. Roll each piece of dough out into a round roughly 5mm-1cm high. Carefully place the dough, in batches, into the hot oil and fry for 2-3 minutes, turning half way through, until puffed up and golden.

Carefully remove the pizzas with a slotted spoon, drain and top with chunky tomato sauce, 1 tsp mozzarella and a sprinkling of oregano. Serve hot.



Sardinian flat bread pizza *Pizza al pane carasau*

SERVES 2-4 ✿ Preparation 15 minutes, plus cooling ✿ Cooking 30 minutes

2 sheets of Sardinian flat bread (pane carasau) – available from www.trestelle.co.uk

125g buffalo mozzarella, thinly sliced

½ a red pepper, seeds removed

½ a yellow pepper, seeds removed

2 tbsp black olives

dried oregano

extra-virgin olive oil

Begin by roasting the peppers under a very hot grill, until the skin begins to blister and blacken. Place in a bowl and cover with clingfilm. When the peppers have cooled, peel off the skins and slice into thin slivers.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. To assemble the pizza, place the two sheets of flat bread on a lined baking tray and top with the slivers of peppers, olives and

mozzarella slices. Sprinkle over some oregano and a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil. Cover with foil and bake in the oven for 25 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for a further 5 minutes. Serve hot.

TIP Use ready prepared peppers in olive oil to save time, if you prefer.

Mixed mini pizzas

Pizzette miste

SERVES 6-8 ✿ Preparation 15 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 15 minutes

500g strong plain flour

300ml tepid water

20g fresh yeast

1 tsp salt

1 tin of anchovies in oil

1 small onion, peeled, finely sliced

a few tablespoons of pitted black olives

250ml passata

250g mozzarella, chopped

1 yellow pepper, seeds removed, flesh finely chopped

To make the dough, mix the yeast with the water until dissolved. Place the flour and salt on a work surface and add the liquid. Knead the dough for at least 5 minutes, until smooth. Leave to rise for 1 hour, or until doubled in size.

Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. When the dough is risen, divide into 12-16 pieces and roll out into 3mm thick rounds. Top each pizza with a spoonful of passata and various toppings such as anchovies and onions, yellow pepper or black olives, and mozzarella. Sprinkle with oregano and bake in the oven for 15 minutes. Serve the pizzas hot or at room temperature.

Filled to perfection

Rebecca Bagniet turns her attention to creating four hearty rustic pizzas that are packed with fillings and cherished by home cooks all over Italy.



Italian basics

DOUBLE PIZZA DOUGH

This is the perfect base for rustic and other stuffed pizzas.

10g active dried yeast

325ml warm water

225g plain all-purpose flour

200g strong white bread flour

1 tsp salt

1 tbsp olive oil

To make the dough, sprinkle the yeast over the warm water and set aside for

a minute, or until the yeast becomes foamy. Stir to completely dissolve the yeast, then add the olive oil to the mixture.

Combine both flours and salt in a large bowl or standing mixer. Add the yeast mixture and, using a dough hook attachment, run the machine on a low speed for 4-5 minutes, or until the dough forms a ball. If making the dough by hand, stir the yeast mixture into the flour until a dough forms, then turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 10 minutes, until the dough is smooth and elastic.

Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl and cover with a clean tea towel. Set aside in a warm spot for 1½-2 hours, until the dough has almost doubled in volume.

Knock back the dough. Using a sharp knife, cut the dough into two pieces, one slightly larger than the other. Shape each piece into a ball. Place the balls in lightly floured cake pans, cover with tea towels, and return to a warm spot for an additional hour. The dough should almost double in volume again.

Rustic ricotta and salami pizza

Pizza rustica con ricotta e salami

MAKES A 23CM DOUBLE-CRUSTED PIZZA (SERVES 8)

✿ Preparation 30 minutes, plus resting

✿ Cooking 45 minutes

This is a hearty creation that makes for a filling treat on a cold day.

1 quantity of basic double pizza dough (see page 98)

225g ricotta cheese

225g dry salami, sliced, cut into quarters

1 fresh tomato, chopped

50g smoked Provolone, cut into cubes

50g mozzarella, grated

3 tbsp finely grated Parmesan

2 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

1 free-range egg, lightly beaten

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. While the dough is in its second rising, make the filling.

Combine all the ingredients together in a bowl. Stir to blend evenly.

Divide the dough into two balls, one slightly bigger than the other. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the first ball to a 30cm round. Add flour as necessary to prevent sticking. Place the dough in a 23cm springform tin, so there is 2.5cm excess hanging over the edge. Pour the filling into the tin.

Roll out the second ball of dough to a 23cm round and place over the top of the filling. Fold the overhanging dough from the bottom round over the edge of the top round, pinching lightly to seal. Make 1-2 slits in the top of the pizza to allow steam to escape during cooking. Bake in the middle of the oven for around 45 minutes. Leave to stand for 10-15 minutes, then slice into eight wedges to serve.



Mozzarella and ham stromboli

Stromboli con mozzarella e prosciutto

MAKES 2 STROMBOLI (SERVES 6-8) ✿ Preparation 30 minutes ✿ Cooking 25 minutes

A *stromboli* – a rolled pizza – is named after the volcanic island of Stromboli because of the way the cheese bubbles out of the base during baking.

1 quantity of calzone dough (page 101)

450g mozzarella, grated

225g ham, thinly sliced

30g unsalted butter, melted

30g Parmesan, finely grated

Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Knock back the dough. Using a sharp knife, divide it into two equal pieces. Shape each piece into a ball and roll out to form two 36 x 30cm rectangles.

Spread half the grated mozzarella over the first rectangle, leaving a 1cm border. Top with half the ham slices. Starting from

the long edge, roll tightly to form a long cylinder. Pinch the seam to seal and fold the ends under. Repeat the process with the second ball of dough.

Brush each stromboli with 1 tbsp melted butter and sprinkle each with 1 tbsp grated Parmesan. Place the stromboli on a baking sheet lined with baking paper and bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, or until the base is golden brown.

Transfer the stromboli to a wire rack and leave to cool for 5 minutes. Slice on the diagonal to serve.



Prawn panzerotti *Panzerotti con gamberi*

MAKES 4 PANZEROTTI

✿ Preparation 30 minutes

✿ Cooking 40 minutes

1 quantity of calzone dough (page 101)

675g prawns, cleaned and deveined

225ml dry white wine

3 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

½ tsp salt

60g unsalted butter

225g button mushrooms, sliced

2 large spring onions, chopped

3 tbsp all-purpose flour

120ml single cream or creamy milk

3 tbsp grated Fontina cheese

Preheat the oven to 230°C/Gas Mark 8. While the dough is resting, prepare the filling. In a large saucepan, combine the prawns, wine, and parsley. Add enough water to just cover the prawns. Bring to a boil and simmer for 5-6 minutes, until the prawns are pink and opaque. Using a slotted spoon, remove the prawns from the liquid. Return the liquid to the boil. Cook until the liquid has reduced to around 230ml. Strain and set aside.

Melt 25g butter in a saucepan. Add the mushrooms and spring onions and sauté for 5-6 minutes, until tender. Set aside. Melt the remaining butter in a separate saucepan. Add the flour, and stir until the mixture forms a smooth paste and begins to bubble. Whisk in the reserved wine liquid. Cook and stir for 1 minute. Add the cream, prawns, mushrooms, and cheese. Stir until the cheese has melted and the mixture is heated evenly. Roll the dough out into four even rounds as described in the calzone dough recipe.

Using a pastry brush, glaze the top edge of the circles with water. Spoon some filling onto the lower half of each round – do not overstuff or they will leak. If there is extra filling, it can be served with the cooked panzerotti as a sauce. Fold the top of the dough over so that the edge of the top sits 1cm away from the bottom half. Lightly glaze the edge of the top piece and fold the bottom over to seal tightly. Make a 1cm slit in the top to allow steam to escape. Place the panzerotti on a baking sheet lined with baking paper and bake in the oven 15-20 minutes, or until the filling is hot and the base is golden brown.

Rustic pancetta and mortadella pizza *Pizza con pancetta e mortadella*

MAKES A 23CM DOUBLE-CRUSTED PIZZA (SERVES 8)

✿ Preparation 30 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 55 minutes

This pizza features a spectacular blend of smoked cheeses and cured meats.

1 quantity of double pizza dough (see page 98)

1-2 mild Italian or herby sausages, skin removed, flesh crumbled

115g pancetta, cubed

15ml extra-virgin olive oil

115g mortadella, cut into small pieces

225g ricotta cheese

50g smoked Provolone, cut into cubes

50g mozzarella, grated

3 tbsp finely grated Parmesan

2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten

1 garlic clove, peeled, finely chopped

2 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

a pinch of crushed red chilli flakes

freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. While the dough is in its second rising, make the filling. Fry the crumbled sausage

meat and pancetta cubes in a pan with some olive oil for 5-6 minutes, until the sausage is cooked through (remove the pancetta from the pan earlier as soon as it is crisp). Drain and place in a large bowl. Add the mortadella, cheeses, eggs, garlic and seasonings, and stir until combined.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the first ball of dough to a 30cm round. Add flour as necessary to prevent sticking. Place the dough in a 23cm springform tin, so there is 2.5cm hanging over the edge. Pour the filling into the tin. Roll out the second ball to a 23cm round and place over the filling. Fold the overhanging dough from the bottom round over the edge of the top round, pinching lightly to seal. Make 1-2 slits in the top of the pizza to allow steam to escape during cooking.

Bake in the oven for 45 minutes. Leave to stand for 10-15 minutes, then slice into eight wedges to serve.

✿ READER OFFER

500 Pizzas & Flatbreads by Rebecca Baugniet (published by Apple Press, RRP £9.99), is available for readers to buy at the special price of £7.99 plus free UK p&p. To order, call ☎ 01903 828 503 and quote code L76. Offer ends 31 May 2011.



Italian basics

BASIC CALZONE DOUGH

175g plain flour

200g strong white bread flour

1 tsp granulated sugar

2 tsp easy-blend dried yeast

1 tsp salt

22ml extra-virgin olive oil

225ml warm water

To prepare the calzone dough, combine the flours, then mix 225g flour with the

sugar, yeast, and salt in a bowl or a standing mixer. Set aside. Combine the olive oil and warm water in a jug. Using the paddle attachment, slowly stir the water and oil into the flour mixture until well combined. Mix in the remaining flour.

Change to the dough hook attachment and knead on low for 4-5 minutes, until the dough comes together as a ball and is smooth and elastic. If not using a standing mixer, turn onto a lightly floured surface and knead by hand for about 10 minutes.

Place in a lightly oiled bowl and cover with a tea towel. Set aside for 10 minutes.

When the dough has rested for 10 minutes, knock it back. Using a sharp knife, cut the dough into four equal pieces. Shape each into a ball, flatten down to form a disc, then lightly flour each disc.

On a lightly floured surface, roll the discs out to about 15cm in diameter and 3mm thick. Add flour as necessary to prevent sticking. Use to make four calzone.



step by step
Pasta frolla

This light crispy pastry may be best known for creating sweet treats in Italy's *pasticceria*, but it can also be used to form tasty and unusual pizza slices. **Ursula Ferrigno** shows us how.

step*by*step Pasta frolla

MAKES ENOUGH DOUGH FOR 1 TART OR 6 PIZZA SLICES

* Preparation 25 minutes, plus resting * Cooking 15 minutes

200g Italian '00' plain flour

a pinch of salt

150g unsalted butter, chilled

85g icing sugar

1 large free-range egg yolk

The Italian *pasticceria* (pastry shop) is an Aladdin's cave of sweet treats. Enticing tarts and pastry seem to wink at you through the window and simply walking past is often not an option. Almost all of the tarts you see will be encased in *pasta frolla*, Italian shortcrust pastry, so to emulate the experience of the *pasticceria* it's essential to get to grips with the process of making it. *Pasta frolla* is quite tricky to work with – it's got a high butter to flour ratio – but this is what makes it so wonderful. It is buttery, light and crisp. Although primarily a sweet pastry, it is also occasionally to be found in savoury dishes. I created the following mozzarella slice after inviting some friends for lunch, and realising that I only had cheese and some pastry in the fridge. It's a variation on a pizza really, only a little bit crunchier. I've started with the instructions for making sweet *pasta frolla* as this is the classic recipe, which you can use to make any kind of tart. To make the mozzarella slices, you will need to alter the ingredients slightly, as instructed on page 104, but the method is exactly the same.



step*one

Assemble your ingredients and equipment. Make sure that the room is cool and have a small glass of very cold water nearby should you need it to help the mixture to bind. (Only add 1-2 tsp at a time, if required.)



step*two

Place the sugar, butter and yolk in a food processor and blend for a few seconds. Add the other ingredients and pulse until a dough is formed. If making savoury pastry add all the base ingredients in one go and pulse.



step*three

Remove from the processor, and knead briefly on a lightly floured surface, until smooth. Wrap in foil and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes. Reflour the surface and roll out as directed in the recipe on page 104.

Now try this...
Mozzarella slice
Tortino di mozzarella

for the base

125g unsalted butter

200g Italian '00' plain flour

4 tbsp iced water

a pinch of salt

for the topping

6 x 125g balls of buffalo mozzarella

6 new potatoes, scrubbed

6 sprigs of fresh thyme

2 garlic cloves, peeled, finely sliced

115g Parmesan, grated

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Mix the base ingredients as described in the step-by-step guide on page 102. Roll into a 20 x 40cm rectangle. Cut into 6 squares. Bake on a baking tray for 15 minutes, then set aside. Turn the oven to 230°C/Gas Mark 8. Cut each mozzarella ball into 4 slices and lay on each square. Slice the potatoes into wafer-thin slices and put on top of the mozzarella with the thyme, garlic and Parmesan. Season. Bake for 8 minutes.





Italian bread

Loved the length and breadth of the country, every region of Italy favours a different type of bread. Read on to discover how to **bring the scents of fresh Italian baking** into your own kitchen...



Rising to the challenge

Every region of Italy has **its own bread speciality**, and here we take a look at a few rustic examples that you can bring to life in your kitchen.



Chickpea and rosemary flatbread *Cecina con rosmarino*

MAKES 1 LARGE FLATBREAD ✨ *Preparation 25 minutes, plus resting* ✨ *Cooking 20 minutes*

This Ligurian speciality should be made with a very good olive oil. It is traditionally baked in a large, shallow copper pan, but a wide metal pizza pan or shallow cake tin will do. The batter itself can be flavoured with chopped rosemary needles, dried chilli or black pepper. If you can't find Italian chickpea flour, use Indian gram flour (available in Asian food stores), although the colour will be paler.

- 4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil**
- 200g Italian chickpea flour (farina di ceci)**
- 1 tsp fine sea salt**
- needles from 4 fresh rosemary sprigs**
- salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Put 500ml cold water in a bowl with 1 tbsp olive oil. Gradually whisk in the chickpea

flour and fine sea salt, until smooth and creamy. Cover and leave to stand for at least 30 minutes, or overnight in the refrigerator, if possible.

Preheat the oven to 230°C/Gas Mark 8. Grease a pizza pan or 28cm shallow cake tin with the remaining olive oil. It must be well oiled to give the right flavour and

ensure a crisp edge. Stir the batter, then pour it into the prepared pizza pan. Sprinkle the rosemary over the top of the dough and bake in the oven for about 20 minutes, until set and golden.

Serve warm, cut into slices or lozenge shapes, and sprinkled with salt and black pepper. Best eaten on the same day.



Ciabatta rolls

Ciabattine

MAKES 12 ROLLS ✨ Preparation 35 minutes, plus resting ✨ Cooking 20 minutes

Ciabatta comes from northern Italy and has become almost as popular and ubiquitous as the baguette. It has a floury crust, a moist open texture, and a good flavour of fruity olive oil. For the best results, use an Italian ciabatta flour, which is granular and quite coarse in texture – this helps to create a lively dough producing the large air bubbles that are needed for the characteristic texture.

300ml hand-hot water

15g fresh yeast

500g ciabatta flour or unbleached strong white bread flour

2 tsp fine sea salt

4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

for the biga (aged-dough starter)

250g unbleached strong white bread flour

5g fresh yeast

150ml hand-hot water

To make the biga, put the flour in a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Crumble the yeast into the well, then pour in the hand-hot water. Mix the yeast with the water, then gradually work in the flour to make a firm dough.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly-floured work surface and knead for 2 minutes, then return the dough to the bowl and cover. Leave at room temperature for 8-12 hours – it will rise enormously, then fall back.

The next day, to make the ciabatta dough, put the hand-hot water in a bowl and crumble the yeast over the top. Stir well, until dispersed. Add the biga and work into the dough by stirring and squeezing with your fingers to make a thick, smooth batter. Work in half of the flour to make a very sticky, batter-like dough, then beat with your hand for 5 minutes until the dough has been thoroughly stretched and become very elastic. Cover the bowl and leave to rise in a warm place until about 2½ times its original size – this will take about 2 hours.

Add the salt and olive oil to the dough, then gradually work in the rest of the flour to make a rather soft, sticky dough. When the dough feels smooth and very elastic, cover the bowl and leave to rise in a warm place as before, this time until doubled in size, which should take about 1 hour.

Gently tip the dough onto a well-floured work surface. Using a floured bread scraper, divide the dough into 12 pieces and transfer to two well-floured trays,

spacing well apart. Shape into rough-looking rolls with well-floured fingers. Dust heavily with flour, then slip the trays into large plastic bags, slightly inflated. Leave to rise in a warm place for about 30 minutes, until almost doubled in size. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 230°C/Gas Mark 8.

Uncover the rolls, then bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown. Leave to cool slightly on a wire rack, then eat while still warm or within a day.

TIP If using fast-action dried yeast, mix one-third of a 7g sachet with the flour to make the biga, then work in the water. Finish the biga as in the main recipe. To make the ciabatta dough, add the water to the biga and work in to make a batter. Then mix half the flour with one 7g sachet of fast-action dried yeast, add to the batter, and finish as in the main recipe.



Rolled pesto, olive and garlic bread

Rotolo con pesto, olive e aglio

MAKES 1 MEDIUM LOAF ✨ Preparation 35 minutes, plus resting ✨ Cooking 25 minutes

This is almost an Italian equivalent of garlic bread, but much better. You can use ordinary pizza dough to make it, or enrich it with egg. The thin dough base is smothered in pesto and green olives, then rolled up to look like a long Swiss roll and left to rise again. Drenched in garlic oil and smothered in Pecorino cheese, the smell alone wafting from the oven is to die for!

500g Italian '00' flour or plain white flour

1 tsp sugar

½ tsp fine sea salt

25g fresh yeast, 1 tbsp dried active yeast or 2 tsp fast-action dried yeast

1 free-range egg, beaten

3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

350ml hand-hot water

250ml fresh pesto

200g large green olives, pitted, flesh roughly chopped

200g Pecorino or Parmesan, grated

2-3 tbsp garlic-infused olive oil salt and freshly ground black pepper

Sift the flour, sugar and salt into a large bowl and make a well in the centre.

Crumble in the fresh yeast or sprinkle in the fast-action dried yeast, if using. If you

are using dried active yeast, follow the manufacturer's instructions. Rub in the yeast until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Pour in the egg, olive oil and hand-hot water, then mix until the dough comes together. Knead the dough energetically on a floured work surface for 5 minutes, until soft, smooth and elastic. Place in a lightly-oiled bowl, cover with clingfilm or a damp tea towel, and leave to rise in a warm place for about 1½ hours, until doubled in size.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Put a bakestone or heavy baking tray in the oven to heat up. When risen, knock back the dough, then roll or pull into a large rectangle as thinly as you can, directly onto a sheet of non-stick baking paper.

Spread the dough liberally with the pesto, leaving a 1cm border all around the dough, then scatter over the olives and 125g

Pecorino. Season to taste with salt and black pepper. Using the baking paper, roll the dough up like a Swiss roll, starting from the long side. Slide the dough onto another sheet of baking paper, making sure that the seam is underneath. Brush the dough with the garlic oil and sprinkle with the remaining Pecorino.

Slide the paper and rolled bread onto a rimless baking tray. Working quickly, open the oven door and slide both paper and bread onto the hot bakestone or baking tray. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes, then carefully slide out the baking paper. Bake for a further 5 minutes, until the crust is golden. Remove from the oven and serve warm or cold, in slices.

Crispy pizza sheets

Pizza crocante

MAKES ABOUT 6 LARGE PIECES ✿ Preparation 35 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 10 minutes

These pizza sheets are so easy to make that you quickly get into the rhythm of preparing them until it becomes second nature. They are great for using up any leftover dough that you might have.

1 quantity of basic pizza dough (see page 36) or any leftover dough

2 tsp dried rosemary (optional)

extra-virgin olive oil, to glaze

sea salt flakes, to sprinkle

Preheat the oven to 230°C/Gas Mark 8.
Lightly oil two large, heavy baking trays.

Uncover the dough, punch out the air and knead in the dried rosemary, if using. Divide the dough into six pieces and roll or pull it directly onto the prepared baking trays. Press the dough out with your fingers as large and flat as you can. It should be so thin you can almost see through it – and it doesn't have to be even.

Brush the dough lightly with olive oil, then scatter with sea salt flakes. Bake in the oven for about 8 minutes, until golden, lightly bubbled, dry and crisp. Shatter the sheets like poppadoms to serve.

Recipe © Maxine Clark, Photography © Richard Jung

Recipe © Maxine Clark, Photography © Richard Jung

Cornmeal muffins

Bocconcini con farina di mais

MAKES 8 MUFFINS ✿ Preparation 40 minutes, plus resting ✿ Cooking 15 minutes

These little flatbreads are made with cornmeal and wheat flour. They are similar to English muffins and are served at local festivals in the Lunigiana, Tuscany. Cooked on a girdle and ready in minutes, they are golden and puffy, and smell delicious. Serve split and filled with cheese, alongside a selection of cold meats and salami.

- 25g fresh yeast, 1 tbsp dried active baking yeast or 2 tsp fast-action dried yeast**
- 1 tsp sugar**
- 400ml hand-hot water**
- 500g Italian '00' flour or plain white flour**
- 200g fine cornmeal or polenta**
- 1½ tsp fine sea salt**
- 6 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil**

In a bowl, cream the fresh yeast with the sugar, then whisk in the hand-hot water. Leave for about 10 minutes, until frothy. For dried yeast, follow the manufacturer's instructions. Sift the flour, cornmeal and salt into a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Pour in the yeast mixture and olive oil. Mix together with a round-bladed knife,

then use your hands to mix, until the dough comes together.

Tip the dough out onto a lightly-floured work surface, wash and dry your hands, then knead the dough briskly for 5-10 minutes until smooth, shiny and elastic – 5 minutes for warm hands, 10 minutes for cold hands! Try not to add any extra flour at this stage, as a wetter dough is better. If you feel the dough is sticky, flour your hands and not the dough. The dough should be quite soft. If it is really too soft to handle, knead in a little more flour.

To test if the dough is ready, roll it into a fat sausage, take each end in either hand, lift the dough up and pull and stretch the dough outwards, gently wiggling it up and down – it should stretch out quite easily. If it doesn't, it needs more kneading. Shape

the dough into a neat ball. Put in an oiled bowl, cover with clingfilm or a damp tea towel and leave to rise in a warm place for about 1½ hours, until doubled in size. Heat a heavy-based frying pan on the hob until medium hot.

Uncover the dough, punch out the air, then tip out onto a lightly-floured work surface. Divide into eight smooth balls, then flatten each into a disc about 1cm thick. Slide two or three discs into the hot frying pan and cook for about 2 minutes on each side, until risen and deep brown on the underside.

Keep the cooked muffins warm and soft in a folded napkin or loosely wrapped in foil in a warm oven while you cook the rest. These muffins are best served warm and eaten on the same day.





Black grape schiacciata

Schiacciata con uva nera

MAKES 1 MEDIUM LOAF ✨ Preparation 35 minutes, plus rising ✨ Cooking 25 minutes

This is a delicious bread to serve warm from the oven at breakfast time. We've used fresh black grapes here, but you can also make a lovely version using semi-dried Montepulciano grapes. If you wanted to try something similar, you could substitute for semi-dried cherries or plump Lexia raisins. Serve it with salty cheeses, such as Gorgonzola or Parmesan.

- 80ml extra-virgin olive oil**
- a handful of fresh rosemary needles**
- 450g extra-strong white bread flour**
- 1 tsp fine sea salt**
- 2 tbsp caster sugar**
- 1 tsp fast-action dried yeast**
- 250ml hand-hot water**
- 400g seedless black grapes**

Put the olive oil and rosemary in a bowl. Give the rosemary several good squeezes to release the aroma into the oil, then set aside for a few minutes.

Put the flour, salt and 1 tbsp sugar in a large bowl and stir well. Add the yeast and stir again. Pour in 2 tbsp of the infused, strained olive oil and enough hand-hot water to make a soft but not sticky dough.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly-floured work surface and knead for 5 minutes, until the dough is smooth and elastic. Fold in the grapes and knead for a further 2-3 minutes. The dough may become sticky at this point, so dust with a little extra flour, if necessary.

Lightly oil a deep baking tin, then press the dough into the tin and push it with your knuckles to fill the tin. Leave to rise in

a warm place for about 40 minutes, or until it has doubled in size. Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7.

Drizzle the remaining infused oil over the dough and scatter some of the rosemary needles and sugar across the top. Bake in the oven for about 25 minutes, or until the surface is golden and the base sounds hollow when tapped. Cool on a wire rack.

Eat on the same day or leave to cool completely, wrap in foil and freeze. When you remove the bread from the freezer, thaw and wrap in foil, then reheat for 5 minutes in a hot oven.



Parmesan soda bread

Pane al parmigiano

MAKES 1 MEDIUM LOAF ✿ Preparation 30 minutes ✿ Cooking 20 minutes

This is an unyeasted bread from Umbria, and very quick to rustle up. When making this type of bread, work quickly, because as soon as the liquid comes into contact with the baking powder a chemical reaction starts to aerate the bread. Use a light hand and get the dough into the oven as soon as possible.

300g Italian '00' flour or plain white flour

1 tsp baking powder

1 tsp fine sea salt

50g Parmesan, grated, plus extra to dust

50g unsalted butter, melted and cooled

100-150ml milk

2 free-range eggs

Put a terracotta bakestone or a large, heavy baking tray on the lower shelf of the oven. Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5 for at least 30 minutes.

Sift the flour, baking powder and salt into a medium mixing bowl. Stir in the Parmesan

and make a well in the centre. Whisk the cooled, melted butter with 100ml milk and the eggs, then pour into the well. Mix until just combined – overmixing will make the bread tough. The dough should be quite soft; if it isn't, add a little more milk.

Turn the dough out onto a floured work surface and knead briefly. Put the ball of dough directly onto a rimless baking tray lined with non-stick baking paper. Pat into a disc about 3cm thick. Brush with a little extra milk, then mark into wedges with the back of a knife and dust with Parmesan.

Working quickly, open the oven door and slide the paper and bread onto the hot

bakestone or baking tray. If you are brave, try to shoot the bread into the oven so that it leaves the paper behind – this might take a bit of practice!

Bake in the oven for 15 minutes, then very carefully slide out and remove the baking paper. Bake the bread for a further 5 minutes, or until the crust is really golden. Remove from the oven and wrap in a clean tea towel. Serve warm, broken into wedges, ready to split and fill.

step❖by❖step Perfect focaccia

Popular since Roman times, focaccia has been perfected over the centuries. Here is **Ursula Ferrigno**'s simple step-by-step guide to making the delicious Italian bread.

step*by*step Perfect focaccia

SERVES 8 ✦ Preparation 30 minutes, plus rising ✦ Cooking 25 minutes

- 7g fresh yeast
- 350ml water (hand hot)
- 7 tbsp biga (see recipe below)
- 5 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 450g strong white unbleached flour
- 1½ tsp sea salt
- for the topping
- 6 tsp finely-chopped fresh rosemary
- 2 tsp coarse salt

Before you start *Biga*

I believe *biga* to be the cornerstone of great Italian bread. Wheat in Italy is traditionally poor for bread-making, so *biga* was designed to boost and enhance the performance of breads. It gives the dough a wonderful texture and smell.

- 2.5g fresh yeast
- 150ml water (hand hot)
- 125g strong white unbleached flour

Crumble the yeast into the water in a bowl, add the flour and mix to a thick batter. Cover with a damp tea towel, and leave to ferment at room temperature for 24-36 hours, but no longer. Keep the cloth permanently damp. And if you find there is slight separation in the biga, don't be alarmed, simply stir it all back together.



step*one

Whisk the yeast into the warm water in a large mixing bowl, and add the biga and 3 tbsp olive oil. Mix the flour and salt together and stir into the yeast mixture to form a soft dough.



step*two

Turn the dough out of the bowl onto a floured surface and knead for 8-10 minutes, until smooth and elastic. Place in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with clingfilm and leave to rise for 1-1½ hours, or until doubled in size.



step*three

Turn the dough out of the bowl and press into a 28 x 43cm baking sheet, forming the dough into an oval shape.



step four

Dimple the dough with your fingertips, sprinkle with the rosemary, the coarse salt and 2 tsp olive oil. Leave to rest for 20 minutes at room temperature, covered.



step five

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Bake the bread in the oven for 25-30 minutes, until the top is golden. Cool on a wire rack, drizzle with good-quality extra-virgin olive oil, and eat while still warm.

Also try...

Cherry tomato focaccia

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Make the focaccia as described above, up until the point where you turn out the dough.

Place the dough on a large baking sheet that has been greased with a little olive oil and form a large round. Make dimples in the dough with your fingers, then cover with a cloth.

Mix together half a cup of boiling water, a generous pinch of sea salt, and a dessertspoon of olive oil with a small balloon whisk to form a thin, milky emulsion.

Use a pastry brush to very gently spread some of this emulsion over the focaccia, being careful not to press down on the dough.

Place a small cherry tomato into each of the dimples, drizzle with olive oil and cook in the oven for 25 minutes.





1



2

4 takes on FOCACCIA

Modern Italian focaccia doesn't just have to take the form of a long rectangular bread, as **Mario Matassa** shows with his four delicious new creations...



3



4

1 Salami & courgette rounds

Girelle alle zucchini e salami

SERVES 4-6 ✨ Preparation 20 minutes, plus rising ✨ Cooking 20 minutes

300g strong plain flour

150-180ml tepid water

½ tsp salt

10g fresh yeast

150g thinly sliced salami

2 courgettes, finely sliced

1 garlic clove, peeled, chopped

olive oil

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Place the flour and salt on a work surface. Pour the water into a bowl, add the yeast and mix until the yeast has dissolved. Add to the flour and knead for at least 5 minutes, until smooth and elastic. Leave to rise for 1 hour, until doubled in size. While the dough is rising, heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a pan and add the garlic and courgettes. Fry until tender, then set aside.

Preheat the oven to 180°C / Gas Mark 4. Once the dough has risen, knock it down, and knead for 2-3 minutes. Roll out to a thickness of 5mm. Cover with the courgettes and salami. Roll the dough up into a big sausage and cut into 2-3cm slices. Place on a lined baking sheet and bake in the oven for 20 minutes. Serve hot or warm.

3 Pancetta and smoked Scamorza muffins

Bocconcini di pancetta e scamorza affumicata

MAKES 12 ✨ Preparation 15 minutes, plus rising ✨ Cooking 20 minutes

300g strong plain flour

150-180ml tepid water

12g fresh yeast

¼ tsp salt

200g pancetta, diced

125g smoked Scamorza cheese, grated

Dissolve the yeast in the tepid water. Place the flour and salt on a work surface, make a well in the centre and add the water and yeast. Knead the dough for a few minutes, until elastic and smooth, then cover with a tea towel and leave to rise for 1-1½ hours. While the dough is rising, gently fry the pancetta pieces in a pan, until browned. Allow the pancetta to cool.

Preheat the oven to 200°C / Gas Mark 6. Once the dough has doubled in size, knock down and add the pancetta and cheese. Knead everything together. Divide the dough into 12 pieces and place each piece in a greased muffin tray. Allow to rise again for 30 minutes, then cook in the oven for 20 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

2 Sage focaccia

Focaccia alla salvia

SERVES 4 ✨ Preparation 10 minutes, plus rising ✨ Cooking 15-20 minutes

300g strong plain flour

10g fresh yeast

150ml tepid water

½ tsp salt

a small sprig of sage leaves

extra-virgin olive oil

salt flakes

Dissolve the yeast in tepid water. Place the flour and salt on a work surface, make a well in the centre and pour in the water and yeast. Bring together and knead. Add the sage and knead, until elastic and smooth. Cover with a tea towel and leave to rise for 1-1½ hours.

Preheat the oven 200°C / Gas Mark 6. Once the dough has doubled in size, knock down and knead again for a few minutes. Divide into four pieces and place into individual greased tins about 10-12cm in diameter. Make indentations on the top of the dough by pressing your finger tips down into the dough. Drizzle generously with extra-virgin olive oil, then sprinkle the tops with salt flakes and leave to rise again for a further 30 minutes. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes. Leave the focaccia to cool on a wire rack before serving.

4 Sun-dried tomato and mozzarella muffins

Bocconcini di pomodori secchi e mozzarella

MAKES 12 ✨ Preparation 15 minutes, plus rising ✨ Cooking 20 minutes

300g strong plain flour

120ml tepid water

10g fresh yeast

½ tsp salt

20g soft unsalted butter

70g sun-dried tomatoes

125g mozzarella, diced

a sprig of rosemary

Dissolve the yeast in the tepid water. Place the flour and salt on a work surface, make a well in the centre and add the water, yeast and butter. Knead the dough for a few minutes, until elastic and smooth, then cover with a tea towel and leave to rise for 1-1½ hours.

Preheat the oven to 200°C / Gas Mark 6. Once doubled in size, knock the dough down and knead again for a few minutes. Divide the dough into 12 pieces and place into muffin cases. Into each piece of dough place a piece of sun-dried tomato, mozzarella cheese and a few rosemary needles. Leave the dough to rise again for 30 minutes, then bake in the oven for 20 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.



WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

We know that many of you may prefer to use imperial or US weights and measures to cook our recipes – use our **conversion tables** to translate recipe quantities from metric.



WEIGHT

10g	¼oz
15g	½oz
25g	1oz
50g	1¾oz
75g	2¾oz
100g	3½oz
150g	5½oz
175g	6oz
200g	7oz
225g	8oz
250g	9oz
275g	9¾oz
300g	10½oz
350g	12oz
375g	13oz
400g	14oz
425g	15oz
450g	1lb
500g	1lb 1oz
700g	1lb 6oz
750g	1lb 7oz
1kg	2lb 2oz
1.25kg	2lb 8oz
1.5kg	3lb 3oz
2kg	4lb 4oz
2.25kg	5lb
2.5kg	5lb 5oz
3kg	6lb 6oz
3.25kg	7lb 2oz
3.5kg	7lb 7oz

MEASUREMENT

3mm	¼in
5mm	¼in
1cm	½in
2cm	¾in
2.5cm	1in
3cm	1¼in
4cm	1½in
5cm	2in
6cm	2½in
7cm	2¾in
8cm	3¼in
9cm	3½in
10cm	4in
12cm	4½in
15cm	6in
17cm	6½in
18cm	7in
20cm	8in
23cm	9in
24cm	9½in
25cm	10in
30cm	12in
35cm	13½in
40cm	15½in

US CONVERSION

<i>Solid</i>		
1 cup	230g	8oz
<i>Liquid</i>		
1 cup	235ml	8fl oz

VOLUME

1.25ml	¼ tsp	
2.5ml	½ tsp	
5ml	1 tsp	
15ml	1 tbsp	
30ml	1fl oz	
50ml	2fl oz	
100ml	3½fl oz	
150ml	5fl oz	¼ pint
200ml	7fl oz	⅓ pint
300ml	10fl oz	½ pint
500ml	18fl oz	
600ml	20fl oz	1 pint
700ml		1¼ pint
850ml		1½ pints
1 litre		1¾ pints
1.2 litres		2 pints

OVEN TEMPERATURES

<i>Celsius</i>	<i>Fahrenheit</i>	<i>Gas</i>	<i>Description</i>
110°C	225°F	¼	cool
130°C	250°F	½	cool
140°C	275°F	1	very low
150°C	300°F	2	very low
170°C	325°F	3	low
180°C	350°F	4	moderate
190°C	375°F	5	moderate/hot
200°C	400°F	6	hot
220°C	425°F	7	hot
230°C	455°F	8	very hot

For fan-assisted ovens reduce temperature by 20°C



step  by  step
Grissini

Never missing from the tables of traditional Italian restaurants, these crunchy sticks also make a **great party snack**. Here's how to make authentic grissini.

step*by*step Grissini

MAKES 15 ✿ Preparation 20 minutes ✿ Cooking 15 minutes

- 1 tbsp fresh yeast, or ½ tbsp active dried yeast
- 100ml warm water
- 225g plain flour
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp olive oil

An Italian classic

Found the length and breadth of Italy, grissini were originally created in Turin. According to legend they were made for the Duke of Savoy, Vittorio Amedeo II, in the 17th century as an alternative to traditional bread, which upset his digestive system. Forget Popeye and his spinach, the healing powers of grissini obviously worked as Vittorio went on to become king of Sicily. Thus a bread snack was born and grissini became the nibble of choice for the aristocracy – Napoleon was reputedly a big fan.

No longer the preserve of the rich and famous, you will most probably have encountered these slender appetisers on many an Italian restaurant table, and while they are widely available ready made, with the less glamorous appellation of breadsticks, making your own is fun and a sure-fire way to make certain your grissini are tasty. Although they are usually eaten unaccompanied in Italy, when served with a dip, they are the perfect nibble for the party season.

Why not try adding Parmesan cheese to the dough, or rolling in poppy or sesame seeds before cooking for added interest? We can also recommend covering them in chocolate.



step*one

Put the yeast in a warm bowl with the sugar, then pour over the warm water. Leave to stand for 5-10 minutes, until it starts to foam. Put the salt, oil and two-thirds of the flour into the bowl with the yeast.



step*two

Mix with a wooden spoon until a ball starts to form and pull away from the sides. Lightly dust a work surface with flour. Take the dough from the bowl and knead on the surface, adding the rest of the flour gradually.



step*three

Knead for 10 minutes, until elastic, then shape into a ball. Take a walnut-sized lump from the dough. Roll into a little sausage with your hands, then set aside on the floured surface. Repeat with the remaining dough.



step four

Put one of the sausages on an unfloured work surface and roll with your fingers into a strand about 1cm thick. If the dough is not rolling easily, dunk in water, then roll with your hands. Lie on a greased baking sheet.



step five

Repeat step 4 with the remaining dough. Preheat the oven to 200°C/ Gas Mark 6. Cover the baking sheet with a cloth and leave to rise for 15 minutes in a warm place. Bake for 15 minutes, turning halfway through.

Perfect with...

Cannellini bean dip

Purée di cannellini

✿ SERVES 4

✿ Preparation 10 minutes

✿ Cooking None

400g tin of cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

leaves from 2 sprigs of thyme

2 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed

juice of 1 lemon

50ml extra-virgin olive oil

Put the beans, thyme, garlic and lemon juice in a blender and blitz until everything is well blended and you have a thick purée. Next, transfer the mixture to a large bowl and, while stirring, add the olive oil in a thin stream, making sure it is well incorporated. Serve with crudités, grissini, bruschetta or crostini.



Baking bread the Bertinet way

No one knows bread better than master baker **Richard Bertinet**, and here he joins us to create three rustic Italian loaves that will delight the senses.

Chestnut flour bread

Pan Martina

MAKES 4 SMALL LOAVES ✨ Preparation 45 minutes, plus fermenting ✨ Cooking 25 minutes

Chestnut flour gives a great flavour to your bread, which you can really enhance by incorporating some whole cooked chestnuts. It also has a rich, dark brown colour, which looks dramatic if you flour the tops of your loaves well, giving a lovely contrast of chocolate brown and white when the crusts burst. This bread looks very effective if you snip the top with a pair of scissors, or you can decorate it by cutting it with a blade or knife. It goes well with strong, gamey casseroles, as well as strong cheese. I even like it toasted with scrambled eggs.

750g strong white flour

400g chestnut flour

700g water

450g fermented white dough (see instructions on page 124)

15g fresh yeast

25g salt

200g whole, peeled vacuum-packed cooked chestnuts, crumbled into chunks

a little white flour, for dusting, plus a little semolina flour, for dusting

butter or vegetable oil, for greasing

Preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 8. Unless you are going to bake in batches, you will need to use both shelves of the oven and preheat two baking stones or baking trays, or one of each, to get really hot. Also, unless you are baking in tins, you will need enough peels or trays to load all the loaves before putting them into the oven. Depending on what style of loaves you want to make, either prepare four 400g greased loaf tins, four proving baskets or bowls lined with baking cloths, or two trays lined with couches or baking cloths (or go for a selection of all of them).

Combine the flours in a large bowl, add the water and mix well for 5 minutes. Cover with a baking cloth and leave to rest for around 30 minutes.

Add the fermented dough and yeast to the bowl, then mix together well using a scraper. When everything begins to come

together into a dough, use your scraper to help you turn it out onto your work surface (you don't need to flour it first).

Work the dough for 5-8 minutes, until it starts to become smooth and elastic. Sprinkle on the salt and work for a further 4-5 minutes. The dough shouldn't be sticky, but should feel elastic and alive.

Very lightly flour your work surface. Place your dough on the surface, sticky-side up, and flatten it out with your fingers. Spread the chestnut pieces over the top of the dough and press them down well. Fold a few times so that all the chestnuts are incorporated into the dough.

Form the dough into a ball, put back into your lightly floured mixing bowl, cover with a baking cloth, and leave to rest for a further 40 minutes.

Lightly flour your work surface again, and turn out the dough with the help of your scraper. Fold the dough, then put back into your bowl, cover with your baking cloth and leave to rest for another 20 minutes.

Lightly flour your work surface again, turn out the dough and divide into 4 x 630g pieces. Don't worry, the dough will fit into your tins. Shape into elongated loaves, or round ones as if forming into a ball. Roll the tops gently in some white flour, then place on your couche or cloth-lined trays or in greased tins, whichever your preference is. Alternatively, you can form the dough into balls and put into well-floured proving baskets or cloth-lined bowls.

Leave the dough to prove, covered with baking cloths, for 1½ hours or until just under double in volume.

Sprinkle some fine semolina onto your peels or trays, then place any loaves that aren't in tins on top. Either snip the tops with sharp scissors or slash with a sharp knife – you don't need to slash the tops of loaves in tins.

Open the oven door and quickly mist the inside of the oven with some water spray. Put in your tins, and/or slide the loaves onto the hot baking stones or trays in the oven, and spray some more water into the oven before quickly closing the oven door.

Set your timer for 5 minutes. After this time, turn down the oven temperature to 220°C/Gas Mark 7 and bake the dough for a further 20 minutes, until the loaves are the colour of deep brown leather and the base of each loaf sounds hollow when tapped underneath. Leave to cool on wire racks before serving.

TIP Chestnut flour bread studded with walnuts is a very popular delicacy in Liguria. While many eat it on its own, locals also say it's delicious topped with slices of salami.

Spelt bread *Pane di farro*

MAKES 2 LARGE LOAVES

✿ Preparation **30 minutes,**
plus fermenting

✿ Cooking **30-35 minutes**

Spelt is enjoying a real renaissance and is especially valuable for those who have an intolerance to wheat. I like it toasted and served with cheese or with seafood.

for the poolish

500g spelt flour

500g water

10g fresh yeast

for the bread

500g spelt flour

10g fresh yeast

20g salt

150g water

100g whole spelt grains, soaked in warm water overnight (optional)

butter or vegetable oil, for greasing

spelt flour, for dusting, plus a little fine semolina, for dusting the peels

First create the poolish by mixing all the poolish ingredients together in a mixing bowl, cover with a baking cloth or large split freezer bag secured with an elastic band and leave for 3-5 hours in a warm place, or overnight in the fridge.

Preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 8. Unless baking in tins, put two baking stones or trays in the oven to get hot. Either lightly grease two 800g bread tins or have ready two proving baskets or bowls lined with baking cloths. Unless you are using tins, you will also need a peel or tray to load the loaves into the oven.

Combine the poolish with the spelt flour, yeast, salt, water and spelt grains (if using), then mix together with the help of a scraper. Use your scraper to help you turn out the dough onto your work surface (don't flour it first). Knead the dough for a few minutes, until it is smooth and elastic.

Lightly flour your work surface, then form the dough into a ball. Put the dough back into your lightly floured mixing bowl, cover with a baking cloth, and leave to rest for around 1 hour.

Lightly dust your work surface with flour, turn out the dough and divide it in half, using the sharp edge of your scraper. Cover



with baking cloths and leave to rest on the work surface for 15 minutes.

Either shape the dough into two large loaves and transfer to your greased tins, or form into balls and put into your lightly floured proving baskets or cloth-lined bowls. Cover with baking cloths and leave to prove for 1 hour, or until just under double in volume, then transfer the loaves to a peel ready for baking.

Open the oven door and quickly mist the inside of the oven with water spray. Put in your tins, or slide the loaves onto your hot baking stones in the oven, and spray with water again before quickly closing the oven door. Set your timer for 2 minutes. After this time, turn down the heat to 220°C/Gas Mark 7 and bake for a further 25-30 minutes, until the bases of the loaves sound hollow when tapped. Leave to cool on wire racks.



Bread with fermented dough

Pane al lieveto naturale

MAKES 12 BAGUETTES OR 6 LARGE LOAVES ✨ *Preparation 20 minutes, plus fermentation* ✨ *Cooking 12-15 minutes*

This bread uses an all-purpose white dough suitable for loaves, baguettes and rolls. Once the ingredients are mixed, you can work it, shape it, and bake it as usual. However, you can also leave it to ferment for 6 hours at room temperature or, better still, overnight in the fridge or a very cool place, and use it as a slightly different kind of ferment on which to build your loaf. Lighter than a poolish ferment, it will give you bread which is slightly darker looking, with a rustic feel and a lovely depth of flavour.

for the fermented white dough

10g fresh yeast

500g strong white flour

10g salt

350g water

for the bread

950g strong white flour

50g dark rye flour

720g water

600g fermented white dough (see above)

20g salt

white flour for dusting, plus a little fine semolina flour, for dusting the peels

First make the fermented white dough. Rub the yeast into the flour using your fingertips, add the salt and water, and mix well until the dough begins to come

together. Turn out onto your unfloured work surface and work the dough. Return to a lightly floured mixing bowl. Cover with a baking cloth and leave to rest at room temperature for 6 hours, or overnight in the fridge, until doubled in volume.

Preheat the oven to 250°C/Gas Mark 8.

Unless you are going to bake in batches, you will need to use both shelves of the oven and put in two baking stones or baking trays, or one of each, to get hot.

You will also need enough peels or trays to load all the loaves before putting them into the oven. Line two large baking trays with couches or baking cloths.

Combine the two flours in a large mixing bowl, and then stir in the water. Mix well, until the dough comes together. Cover with a baking cloth and leave to rest for around 30 minutes.

Add 600g fermented dough and mix well. When everything starts to come together, use your scraper to help you turn the dough out onto your work surface. Work the dough until it starts to become smooth and elastic. Sprinkle on the salt and work for another 2-3 minutes. After this time, it should be supple and elastic and come away from the work surface easily.

Lightly flour your work surface, then fold the dough into a ball. Put back into your lightly floured mixing bowl, cover with a baking cloth and leave to rest for 1½ hours.

Lightly flour your surface, turn out the dough with the help of your scraper, fold, then put back into the bowl. Leave to rest for another hour.

Lightly flour your work surface again and turn out the dough. Divide it into 12 x 185g pieces and cover with a baking cloth to stop them from drying out while you're shaping them. Shape the first baguette and place on a lightly floured couche or cloth-lined tray, seam-side down. Make a pleat in the couche or cloth, then shape the next baguette and place it on the tray, so that the pleat keeps it separate from the first one. Carry on forming your baguettes and pleating the couche/cloth so that none of the loaves touch each other. Cover with another baking cloth and leave to prove for about 1 hour, or until just doubled in volume.

Sprinkle some semolina flour onto your long peels and place two baguettes on each, seam-side down. Slash the tops. Open the oven door and, using a water spray, quickly squirt the inside with water. Slide the baguettes quickly onto your baking stones or trays. You should be able to fit six baguettes on each. Spray a little more water, then close the oven door quickly.

TIP This will make around 900g dough. You only need 600g for this recipe, so you can leave the rest in the fridge for a few days and use in your next batch of baking. Alternatively, you could use it as a pizza base.

✨ **BERTINET COOKERY SCHOOL**

If you've enjoyed these bread recipes and would like to learn more at the side of the bread master Richard Bertinet himself, then book one of the classes at his renowned Bertinet Kitchen Cookery School in Bath. For further information, visit www.thebertinetkitchen.com or call ☎ 01225 445531.



Italian bread made easy

Jeff Hertzberg and Zoë François show us how to create delicious loaves of Italian bread the easy way – and there's no bread machine in sight!



© iStock photo

Olive oil dough

MAKES 4 X 450G LOAVES

✿ Preparation 15 minutes, plus resting

✿ Cooking None

This versatile dough will make four of the prosciutto flatbreads below.

- 675ml lukewarm water
- ½ tbsp granulated yeast
- 1½ tbsp coarse grain salt
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 900g unbleached plain flour

- 1 Mix the yeast, salt, sugar and olive oil with the water in a 5 litre bowl, or a lidded (not airtight) food container.
- 2 Mix in the flour without kneading by using a spoon, a 3.5 litre capacity food processor (with dough attachment), or a heavy-duty stand mixer (with dough hook). If you're not using a machine, you may need wet hands to incorporate the flour.
- 3 Cover the dough loosely, and leave to rest at room temperature, until the dough rises and collapses, or flattens on top. This should take around 2 hours.
- 4 The dough can be used immediately after the initial rise, although it is easier to handle when cold. Refrigerate in a lidded container and use to make the flatbreads below within 12 days.

Prosciutto and olive oil flatbread

MAKES 6 APPETISER PORTIONS

✿ Preparation 30 minutes, plus resting

✿ Cooking 25 minutes

My friend Ralph's mother comes from Naples, and she remembers a bread that was studded with pieces of pork. The *lardo* from the pork melted into the bread and created a fantastic rich crumb. The bread was called *pane di lardo*.

- 450g olive oil dough (see left)
- ¼ tsp dried rosemary, crumbled, or ½ tsp fresh
- 50g sliced prosciutto or Serrano ham, cut into 2.5cm squares
- flour, for dusting
- polenta or parchment paper, for the pizza peel
- cornflour wash (see tip below)

- 1 Dust the surface of the refrigerated olive oil dough with flour and cut off a 450g piece. Dust the piece with more flour and quickly shape it into a ball by stretching the surface of the dough around to the bottom on all four sides, rotating the ball a quarter turn as you go. Using your hands and a rolling pin, flatten the dough to a thickness of about 1cm.
- 2 Layer the meat onto the dough and sprinkle it with the crumbled rosemary. Roll up the dough and shape it into a ball. Flatten the ball to a thickness of approximately 2.5cm, and leave to rest and rise on a polenta-covered pizza peel for 40 minutes, or just 20 minutes if you're using fresh, unrefrigerated dough. Consider a longer resting time if you find your results are denser than you'd like.
- 3 Around 30 minutes before the baking time, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6, with a baking stone placed near the middle of the oven. Place an empty

grill tray on any other shelf that won't interfere with the rising bread.

4 Just before baking, brush the bread with cornflour wash and slash a deep cross, scallop or criss-cross pattern into the top using a serrated bread knife.

5 Slide the loaf directly onto the hot stone. Pour 250ml hot tap water into the grill tray, and quickly close the oven door. Bake for about 25 minutes, or until richly browned and firm.

6 Allow the bread to cool before cutting into wedges and eating.

TIP To make the cornflour wash, blend ½ tsp cornflour with a small amount of water to form a paste. Add 120ml water and whisk with a fork. Boil until the mixture appears glassy.

Italian semolina bread

MAKES 4 X 450G LOAVES

✿ Preparation 20 minutes, plus resting

✿ Cooking 35 minutes

White, free-form loaves flavoured with semolina and sesame seeds are the fragrant products of southern Italy. Semolina is a high-protein wheat flour that gives loaves a sweetness and an almost winey aroma. The flavour of the sesame seeds is inextricably linked to the semolina flavour. Be sure to use semolina flour that's labelled 'durum' as other semolina flours won't do as well in this method.

- 750ml lukewarm water
- 1½ tbsp granulated yeast
- 1½ tbsp coarse grain salt
- 420g semolina flour
- 450g unbleached plain flour
- sesame seeds for top crust, approximately 1-2 tsp
- polenta or parchment paper, for the pizza peel
- cornflour wash (see tip above)

- 1 Mix the yeast and salt with the lukewarm water in a 5 litre bowl, or a lidded (not airtight) food container.
- 2 Mix in the flours without kneading by using a spoon, a 3.5 litre-capacity food processor (with dough attachment), or a heavy-duty stand mixer (with dough hook). If you're not using a machine to make the bread, you may need to use wet hands to incorporate the last bit of flour.



© iStock photo

Olive oil dough

MAKES 4 X 450G LOAVES

✿ Preparation 15 minutes, plus resting

✿ Cooking None

This versatile dough will make four of the prosciutto flatbreads below.

675ml lukewarm water
½ tbsp granulated yeast
1½ tbsp coarse grain salt
1 tbsp caster sugar
3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
900g unbleached plain flour

1 Mix the yeast, salt, sugar and olive oil with the water in a 5 litre bowl, or a lidded (not airtight) food container.

2 Mix in the flour without kneading by using a spoon, a 3.5 litre capacity food processor (with dough attachment), or a heavy-duty stand mixer (with dough hook). If you're not using a machine, you may need wet hands to incorporate the flour.

3 Cover the dough loosely, and leave to rest at room temperature, until the dough rises and collapses, or flattens on top. This should take around 2 hours.

4 The dough can be used immediately after the initial rise, although it is easier to handle when cold. Refrigerate in a lidded container and use to make the flatbreads below within 12 days.

Prosciutto and olive oil flatbread

MAKES 6 APPETISER PORTIONS

✿ Preparation 30 minutes, plus resting

✿ Cooking 25 minutes

My friend Ralph's mother comes from Naples, and she remembers a bread that was studded with pieces of pork. The *lardo* from the pork melted into the bread and created a fantastic rich crumb. The bread was called *pane di lardo*.

450g olive oil dough (see left)
¼ tsp dried rosemary, crumbled, or ½ tsp fresh
50g sliced prosciutto or Serrano ham, cut into 2.5cm squares
flour, for dusting
polenta or parchment paper, for the pizza peel
cornflour wash (see tip below)

1 Dust the surface of the refrigerated olive oil dough with flour and cut off a 450g piece. Dust the piece with more flour and quickly shape it into a ball by stretching the surface of the dough around to the bottom on all four sides, rotating the ball a quarter turn as you go. Using your hands and a rolling pin, flatten the dough to a thickness of about 1cm.

2 Layer the meat onto the dough and sprinkle it with the crumbled rosemary. Roll up the dough and shape it into a ball. Flatten the ball to a thickness of approximately 2.5cm, and leave to rest and rise on a polenta-covered pizza peel for 40 minutes, or just 20 minutes if you're using fresh, unrefrigerated dough. Consider a longer resting time if you find your results are denser than you'd like.

3 Around 30 minutes before the baking time, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6, with a baking stone placed near the middle of the oven. Place an empty

grill tray on any other shelf that won't interfere with the rising bread.

4 Just before baking, brush the bread with cornflour wash and slash a deep cross, scallop or criss-cross pattern into the top using a serrated bread knife.

5 Slide the loaf directly onto the hot stone. Pour 250ml hot tap water into the grill tray, and quickly close the oven door. Bake for about 25 minutes, or until richly browned and firm.

6 Allow the bread to cool before cutting into wedges and eating.

TIP To make the cornflour wash, blend ½ tsp cornflour with a small amount of water to form a paste. Add 120ml water and whisk with a fork. Boil until the mixture appears glassy.

Italian semolina bread

MAKES 4 X 450G LOAVES

✿ Preparation 20 minutes, plus resting

✿ Cooking 35 minutes

White, free-form loaves flavoured with semolina and sesame seeds are the fragrant products of southern Italy. Semolina is a high-protein wheat flour that gives loaves a sweetness and an almost winey aroma. The flavour of the sesame seeds is inextricably linked to the semolina flavour. Be sure to use semolina flour that's labelled 'durum' as other semolina flours won't do as well in this method.

750ml lukewarm water
1½ tbsp granulated yeast
1½ tbsp coarse grain salt
420g semolina flour
450g unbleached plain flour
sesame seeds for top crust, approximately 1-2 tsp
polenta or parchment paper, for the pizza peel
cornflour wash (see tip above)

1 Mix the yeast and salt with the lukewarm water in a 5 litre bowl, or a lidded (not airtight) food container.

2 Mix in the flours without kneading by using a spoon, a 3.5 litre-capacity food processor (with dough attachment), or a heavy-duty stand mixer (with dough hook). If you're not using a machine to make the bread, you may need to use wet hands to incorporate the last bit of flour.

3 Cover the dough loosely and leave to rest at room temperature, until the dough rises and collapses or flattens on top. This should take about 2 hours.

4 The dough can be used immediately after the initial rise, although it is easier to handle when cold. Refrigerate in a lidded (not airtight) container and use to make four loaves within 14 days.

5 On baking day, dust the surface of the refrigerated dough with flour and cut off a 450g piece. Dust the piece with more flour and quickly shape it into a ball by stretching the surface of the dough around to the bottom on all four sides, rotating the ball a quarter turn as you go. Elongate the ball to form an oval-shaped free-form loaf. Leave to rest and rise on a polenta-covered pizza peel for 40 minutes (consider a longer resting time if you find your results are denser than you'd like).

6 Around 30 minutes before the baking time, preheat the oven to 230°C/Gas Mark 8, with a baking stone placed on the middle rack. Place an empty grill tray on any other shelf that won't interfere with the rising bread.

7 Just before baking, paint the surface of the dough with cornflour wash, sprinkle with sesame seeds, and slash the surface diagonally using a serrated knife.

8 Slide the loaf directly onto the hot stone. Pour 250ml hot tap water into the grill tray, and quickly close the oven door. Bake in the oven for 30-35 minutes, until deeply browned and firm. Smaller or larger loaves will require adjustments in baking time. Leave to cool before slicing.

TIP These recipes include a good dose of salt – you can decrease the amount if you would prefer.

Sun-dried tomato and Parmesan bread

MAKES A 450G LOAF

❖ Preparation 30 minutes, plus resting

❖ Cooking 35 minutes

Bright and intense tomato flavours harmonise nicely with the richness of aged Italian cheese. That's a combination we love in pasta dishes, so we've created a bread with those flavours. If you can get authentic Parmigiano Reggiano, use it here; if not, use whatever hard Italian grating cheese you usually use on your pasta.

450g Italian semolina bread dough (see left up to stage 4)

olive oil, for brushing the loaf

50g sun-dried tomatoes in oil, drained, roughly chopped

40g Parmesan, grated

polenta or parchment paper, for the pizza peel

1 On baking day, dust the surface of the refrigerated dough with flour and cut off a 450g piece. Dust the piece with more flour and quickly shape it into a ball by stretching the surface of the dough around to the bottom on all four sides, rotating the ball a quarter turn as you go.

2 Roll the ball out into a 5mm rectangle. As you roll out the dough, use enough flour to prevent it from sticking to the work surface, but not so much that it starts to make the dough dry.

3 Brush the dough with olive oil. Scatter the sun-dried tomatoes evenly over

the dough and sprinkle the cheese over the tomatoes. Starting from the short end, roll the dough into a log and gently tuck the ends under to form an oval loaf. Leave to rest and rise on a polenta-covered pizza peel for 1 hour (or just 40 minutes if you're using fresh, unrefrigerated dough).

4 Around 30 minutes before the baking time, preheat the oven to 230°C/Gas Mark 8, with a baking stone placed on the middle rack (you should consider a longer preheat if you find your results are denser than you'd like). Place an empty grill tray on any other shelf that won't interfere with the rising bread.

5 Brush the top of the dough lightly with olive oil and slash parallel cuts across the loaf using a serrated bread knife. Slide the loaf directly onto the hot stone.

6 Pour 250ml hot tap water into the grill tray, and quickly close the oven door. Bake the bread for 30-35 minutes, or until deeply browned and firm. Leave to cool before slicing or eating.

TIP Pizza peels are large wooden or metal utensils with long handles used for bringing pizzas in and out of hot ovens. They're available from many different companies, including www.fornobravo.com. Wood and metal pizza peels work equally well for these recipes, but dust liberally with polenta before putting wet dough loaves on them or they will stick. If you don't have a pizza peel, a flat baking sheet with no sides will do, but it will be more difficult to handle, as will a wooden chopping board.

❖ READER OFFER

Readers of *Taste Italia* can buy *Five Minute Bread* by Jeff Hertzberg and Zoë François (RRP £14.99, published by Ebury Press) for the special price of £12.99 with free UK p&p. To order, call ☎ 01206 255 800 and quote reference 'Taste Italia'.



Five Minute Bread

Mix 4 ingredients → Pop it in the fridge → Shape, bake and eat

The revolutionary new baking method:
**NO BREAD MACHINE,
NO KNEADING!**

Jeff Hertzberg and Zoë François

Pizza Collection

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TAPENADE BREAD TWISTS

Peter Sidwell creates the perfect all-in-one midday snack and party pleaser with these flavoursome black olive tapenade twists.

SERVES 4  Preparation 30 minutes, plus proving  Cooking 20 minutes

250g strong white flour
250g Italian '00' pasta flour
1 tsp dried yeast or 20g fresh yeast
½ tsp salt
½ tsp sugar
50ml extra-virgin olive oil (or if you have a jar of sun-dried tomatoes in oil, use the oil from that as it has lots of flavour)
luke warm water (around 200ml)

for the tapenade

250g black olives
4 salted anchovies
½ a garlic clove, peeled
30ml extra-virgin olive oil
a handful of flat-leaf parsley

To make a simple Italian-style bread dough, mix the two flours together in a bowl. Add the yeast to one side of the bowl and the salt to the other side. It is important not to mix the salt and yeast together at this stage, as salt can kill the yeast.

Add the sugar and olive oil, then add a little of the warm water. Start mixing the dough together with your hands and keep adding the water a little at a time, until you have a nice smooth dough.

Transfer the dough to a lightly floured worksurface and knead by stretching it with one hand and holding it with the other, then pull the stretched dough back towards yourself and push the dough together. Continue for a few minutes, until the dough is smooth. Place the dough back into the bowl and cover. Put in a warm place to prove and double in size.

Meanwhile, make the tapenade. Place all the tapenade ingredients into a food processor and blend until smooth. Taste and season according to your personal taste, then pour into a jam jar or container. Store in the fridge until ready to use.

Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. When the dough has doubled in size, scoop it out onto a work surface. Dust with a little flour and roll out into a large rectangle approximately 5mm thick. Spread the tapenade evenly over the front half of the dough. Fold the dough over to encase the filling.

Using a large knife, cut the dough into long sticks about 1cm thick, then twist each of the sticks slightly along the length of the dough. Drizzle with a little oil and a sprinkling of sea salt, then carefully transfer to a baking tray. Cook in the oven for 20 minutes, until golden and crisp.

PAOLETTI

Bibita
Gassosa
dal 1922



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