

Pizza Dough Made From Polish

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If you are like most Americans you, by now, have probably eaten your weight in pizza. If you have teeth and can say the words 'another slice please' your person is likely composed of lot of pizza. This recipe is mainly about the pizza dough and the shaping. The sauce, toppings and cheeses are yours to choose and perfect!

Focaccia is not as familiar to most folks but it is growing in popularity. The focaccia made using my method is light in texture and delightfully chewy. It is topped with tomatoes and herbs and a good hard cheese. I bet you'll like it. There is a separate recipe card for it even though the dough is identical.

Good Bread, Good Meat...

So begins every sixth grader's favorite grace that can't be said at grandma's. While pizza doesn't *require* a meat topping to be satisfying, one frequently is included. The larger variety in toppings comes from all kinds of vegetables and cheeses.

So why is pizza so popular? To start with pizza is a good way to eat great bread - and plenty of it. The bread foundation in this case is not just a place to build a meal, but with the right recipe it is delight on it's own. Pizza's widespread popularity may also be explained by how easy it is to make to specification. Picky eaters love the way the folks at the pizzeria don't complain because of a request for extra cheese, no mushrooms, little sauce or some wild combo.

Pizza comes in a variety of styles and shapes including deep dish, thin crust, white, red, vegetarian or meaty. This recipe makes a crust that is light, chewy and with an occasional big bubble. I think you'll like it! My advice is to make it fresh and make it often.

Consider the Sauce!

Once settled on a bread base it is time to consider a sauce. Just about any good quality jarred pizza or marinara sauce will do. For white pizza you can use a commercially prepared alfredo or make some from scratch using an old family recipe. The sauce is a supporting actor in the cast of flavors and probably ranks last in importance. How much to apply is a matter of preference. Conventional wisdom says to go sparingly and I would agree most of the time, but some folks like lots of sauce and will put



up with the extra messiness it causes. When you seek to please those that you feed, they will let you keep feeding them.

Pizza in just 3 days...

Three days seems a long time in a world where pizza is 20 minutes away. Using polish for pizza dough is not a conventional approach but it works well. The overnight proofing steps mean that this dough can take up to three days to be ready stretch or toss. The flavor is fantastic when you let the yeast work slowly. I always start a batch or two of polish on Thursday night before bed for use on the weekend. By Friday morning it goes in the fridge and it's final purpose is at that point undefined. It could become bagels, cinnamon rolls, focaccia, pizza, ciabatta or just about any other yeast bread product.

I know that sometimes you don't have three days so there are instructions to cut the time down to about four hours. Plan if you can, rush if you must.

Pizza Dough from Polish

Day 1: Make Polish and place in fridge. (see reverse)

Day 2: Place in stand mixer bowl:
Small batch of polish aged for a day in the fridge (750 grams)
1 teaspoon instant yeast (4 grams)
200 grams bread flour (1 1/3 cup)
1 1/4 teaspoon salt (11 grams)
3 tablespoon herb oil (40 grams)

Mix with flat beater for 45 seconds to 1 minute, just to bring together. Switch to dough hook and knead for a total of 10-12 minutes with one or two ten minute rests to allow good hydration. When dough is smooth and elastic remove it to a well oiled bowl and with oiled hands form a ball. Turn dough ball over in residual oil in bowl to coat. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and place in the fridge overnight.

Day 3: Remove dough from fridge and handle gently on well floured surface. Divide into three equal segments of 300-325 grams each. Form each segment into a ball and place on a well oiled pan. Spray with cooking spray and loosely cover with plastic wrap. Place in fridge overnight, or proof on counter. The dough balls will increase in size they are ready when about double in bulk.

Pizza time: Remove dough ball with dough scraper to well floured surface. Spread, working gently against the surface moving toward outer edge. When dough is about 8 or 9 inches in diameter, stretch on back of hands to about 12 inches. Dough is ready to sauce and cover with toppings and cheese. Bake in a very hot oven using the method you prefer: Pans; peel; parchment or screens!

Direct Method

In the stand mixer bowl combine:

(by weight)
550 grams bread flour
6 grams instant yeast
11 grams salt
400 ml/grams water
40 grams herb oil

(by measure)
5 level cups bread flour
1 1/2 tsp instant yeast
1 1/4 tsp salt
14 fl oz water
3 tbs herbed oil

Mix with flat beater for about 1 minute on low speed. Knead with hook four minutes. Rest 10 minutes. Knead additional 10 minutes with hook. Turn into well oiled bowl and form ball with oiled hands, turning dough to coat. Cover with plastic wrap Proof till double. Divide into three, form into balls on well floured surface. Spray with cooking spray, cover with plastic and Proof till about double in size.

Poolish is Flexible

Each of the recipes you will find at www.breadtechnique.com starts with the same sized batch of poolish. That allows flexibility and slow fermentation in one easy step. The recipe is included below.

Recipe Below, Good Pizza Ahead!

Three days before pizza day make the poolish. Stir together 350 grams of bread flour (2 ½ cups) and a pinch of instant yeast in a two quart bowl. Add 400 grams or ml (14 oz) of good quality water. Stir to a heavy batter consistency and cover with plastic wrap or a plate. Let it set on counter for 8-12 hours or overnight. It will double in bulk and resemble tapioca pudding. Age for up to two days in your fridge.

Two days before pizza day bring the poolish to room temperature and place in the stand mixer bowl. Sprinkle on an additional teaspoon of instant yeast. Cover the yeast with a mound of 200 grams (1 1/3 cups) bread flour leaving a slight ring of exposed poolish surface. Next add 11 grams (1 1/4 teaspoon) of salt on top of the flour mound. Somewhere near the edge of the bowl pour 40 grams (3 tablespoons) of herbed olive oil or regular extra virgin olive oil.

Mount the flat beater and stir on low speed for about 45 seconds. Scrape down the flat beater. Mount the dough hook and machine knead for about 4-6 minutes. Stop the mixer and let the dough rest for 10-15 minutes. Resume the machine kneading for another 4-6 minutes until the dough is smooth and elastic. It should be quite sticky, clear the sides of the bowl but cling to the bottom of the bowl. A little more flour may be necessary to clear the sides of the bowl. Add this a tablespoon at a time. With oiled hands, turn the dough into a 4 quart or larger mixing bowl that is smeared with about 1 tablespoon of herbed or plain olive oil. Flip the dough over to coat both sides. Tuck the bottom in forming a smooth ball. Cover and place in the fridge overnight.

Portion Three Dough Balls

One day before pizza day flour a surface liberally and turn the dough onto it. It will deflate a little - that is okay, there is still one additional fermentation period. Shape it gently into a ball coating the outside surface with flour as needed. Rest the dough for about ten minutes then divide the large ball into three approximately equal wedges of 300 to 325 grams. The

cut surfaces will still be sticky.

Coat the outside of each segment with flour and shape each one into a small ball using a rolling and cupping motion. Place the three balls on a 9"x13" baking pan about three inches apart. Spray the dough on top with cooking spray and cover with plastic wrap.

Put the pan in the fridge overnight. These balls of dough are ready to stretch and toss when they begin to touch and are nearly double in bulk.

Start Stretching and Spinning

On pizza day, about an hour before making the pizzas turn on the oven to it's highest setting (500 - 550° F). If a baking (pizza) stone is available it should be in place as you begin the preheat. Assemble toppings, grate cheeses. About 30 minutes before the baking begins remove the dough balls from the fridge.

Liberally flour a counter top. Transfer a dough ball to the counter using a dough scraper or bowl scraper and gently coat both sides of the dough with flour. Lay the dough on the counter and begin to press from the center to stretch the dough. It will be well rested and should give way easily to your touch.

When the dough is about 8 inches in diameter from bench stretching, flour your hands front and back. Pick up the disk and lay in on the back of one hand, tucking in your fingers. Let the dough droop under its own weight from the back of one hand to the other hand and it will become surprisingly large quickly! Having the dough on the back of both hands leads to a temptation to give it toss. PLEASE DO! Throw with a sharp upward circular motion.

It's a good idea to have some extra dough on hand when you first try this because some will end up unusable - on the floor, in the sauce bowl, in a knot! Remember to sweep up afterward because flour is going to be on the floor. It's messy, fun, and definitely not for the compulsively neat, but makes good pizza.

How you bake the pizza is cook's choice! Parchment paper, pizza screens, individual pans or a pizza peel and baking stone are all possibilities and are well demonstrated in the video, **Pizza and Focaccia at Home** available from www.breadtechnique.com.

Basic Small Batch Poolish

(makes about 750 grams)

Mix together in a 2 quart bowl to heavy pancake batter consistency:

2 ½ cups (350 grams) bread flour
pinch of yeast (1/8 tsp or a little less)
14 ounces of good tasting water (400 ml)

Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and leave on the counter overnight (8-12 hours). In 8-12 hours it will be double in bulk, bubbly and will resemble tapioca pudding. Move the poolish to the refrigerator to store it there for up to two days. It can also be used right away, but you'll sacrifice flavor.

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is a website resource supported by the
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Each dough ball will easily stretch to 12 to 14 inches.

I'm happy to share my dough recipe - the rest is up to you. Add a pizza sauce, marinara, alfredo or any sauce that pleases your pallet. Add one or two toppings and a good cheese blend. Who knew family pizza night could be so much fun?

Please visit my website for more free recipes, cooking tips and news about new instructional baking DVDs. The DVDs make great gifts and reference material.

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