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The New Family Pizza Night: Why It's Better Than Your Old One

By Kelsey Banfield, Molly Herrmann - Tuesday, August 25 2009 - No Comments

Pizza night is an institution in most households, and ours is no different. It is generally acknowledged that serving pizza is the path of least resistance amongst children, and every parent appreciates at least one meal per week completely free of protest. The good news is that these days parents can opt to forgo buying caloric-laden pizzas in favor of making healthy, delicious pies in their own kitchen.

Two of the great things about making pizza are that you can add your own flavors and engage the whole family in the preparation. Letting children experiment with different sauces and toppings is a great way to introduce them to new foods and flavors. If they want to top a pizza with sausage and broccoli, let them! After all, if they aren't going to try it on top of pizza, when are they? And, if there is a picky eater in your midst, it is perfectly fine to leave half a pizza toppings-free so they can enjoy classic cheese.

When it comes to the crust we like to keep it both nutritious and gourmet by using whole-wheat flour and fresh rosemary. The flavors always meld beautifully with whatever toppings we choose, and it is a snap to prepare. The dough requires only minimal time to rest (10 min!) and you are on your way.

What does your family do for pizza night? We are sure there are lost of great ideas for enjoying mealtime together, and we would love for you to share you tips and techniques.

Naptime Whole-Wheat Rosemary Pizza Dough

Ingredients:

- 1 packet yeast (.25 oz) - make sure it is not expired!
- 1/4 tsp. sugar
- 3/4 cup warm water, (no hotter than 110°F, so as not to kill the yeast)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1 tsp. coarse salt
- 2 tsp. fresh rosemary (use dry if you can't find fresh)
- 4 oz. Muir Glen Organic Tomato Sauce (or your preferred pizza sauce of choice)

Topping Ideas: Grated cheese, sliced fresh mozzarella cheese, prosciutto strips, mushrooms, sausage slices, fresh basil, roasted eggplant, pepperoni, caramelized onions, grilled peppers, bbq chicken, arugula - and just about anything else you can think of!

Directions:

Step 1

Preheat oven to 450. Empty yeast packet into small glass bowl. Add sugar and warm water, and let sit for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, yeast should be activated, and water will be absorbed. Meanwhile, in separate bowl, add flours, salt and rosemary, and combine. Once yeast mixture has absorbed water, combine flour mixture with yeast.

Step 2

Knead dough with your hands and dough scraper on well-floured surface, for about five minutes, making sure everything is fully incorporated. As you knead, keep sprinkling flour on surface to make sure it doesn't get too sticky. Coat rolling pin lightly with flour and roll dough out until it is round to fit on pizza stone, or rectangular to fit on pan.

Step 3

If you are using a pizza stone, sprinkle with cornstarch to prevent dough from sticking. Or, if you are using a 12x18 jelly roll pan, sprinkle a few drops of olive oil on pan, brush it around, then dust with flour. Transfer dough to stone or pan, taking care not to tear.

Step 4

Spread dough with sauce and toppings. Bake for 15 minutes or more, until crust turns golden brown and crispy.

For Tomato Season: Roasted Tomato Soup

The New Family Pizza Night: Why It's Better

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Tastebud Tip:

Kids just love to get in on the action...and sometimes in your way. Letting them help with dinner, without making a huge mess, can be as simple as finding the right tools for the job!

This Zyliss Palm Held Pizza Slicer is perfect for tiny folks with little hands and less than perfect coordination. Having the slicer under their hand makes cutting pizza (or herbs or bread or anything else!) loads easier. It also makes it safer to not have their precious fingers near an exposed blade!

Next time, let your kids have a try at slicing the pie. Or let them go at their own slice to create fun geometric shapes. Who said dinner can't be nutritious, fun + educational? Isosceles anyone?

Got some great tips or tools of your own to share? Tell us!

It's time to face the facts: Lavish meals are looking like they are a thing of the past. If you're like us, though, you're not ready to start filling out meals with canned tuna, or premade pancakes for dinner. Join us as we go kicking and screaming into a world where a fancy feast is only a cat brand. We refuse to go down without a fight, so we brainstormed ways to eat gourmet on a budget, without eating budge gourmet.

[Comments \(4\)](#)



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- Korean Barbecue Beef Bulgogi
- 5 Ways to Stay Gourmet
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