Making a Pizza

Pizza was originally an Italian traditional food which has become a world favourite. It is essentially a bread base with a tomato topping, dressed with mozzarella cheese and basil. The red, white and green colours are representative of the Italian Flag.

500g strong white flour, 6ml olive oil, 3g dried yeast, 250ml warm water, 1 egg.

5 large plum tomatoes (or similar), mozzarella cheese, fresh basil, ground pepper.

Mix the flour and dried yeast in a mixing bowl with a whisk. Make a well in the middle and add the egg, olive oil and about half of the warm water and mix to a stiff dough. Add a little more water if required. Sprinkle with flour and kneed for a while to stretch the dough. Rest for an hour, covering with a cloth (or cling film).

Whilst the dough is rising, chop some plum tomatoes (about 5 large ones) into a pan and heat until they start to disintegrate into a mush. Cover with a sieve to prevent splashing.





When soft, the tomatoes are strained through a sieve to remove the seeds and skin. The resulting liquid needs to be reduced to a thicker consistency over a moderate heat. (cover with a sieve)





Kneed the dough and cut into fist size pieces. Flatten the dough and roll out onto a baking sheet. Prick with a fork and leave to rise for at least 20 minutes. Bake in the middle of a preheated oven at 200ºC for 12 minutes. Turn out onto a pizza pan.





To prepare the topping it is best to have all of the ingredients ready when the pizza base comes out of the oven.

The cheese may need to stand for a few hours to dry out if it is very wet. Slice the cheese using a sharp knife into thin slices. Tear the basil leaves into small pieces. Prepare the topping ingredients, in this case freshly sliced and fried mushrooms which have been dried on tissue to prevent water-logging the pizza surface. Coat the base with the tomato puree, add the cheese slices then the mushroom topping and sprinkle with basil leaves and pepper.







Bake in a moderate preheated oven (180ºC) for 15 minutes. When cooked, cut with a pizza cutter and serve at once. Pizza is good with salad accompaniment and a light white wine.



For a classic margarita, omit the mushrooms and add pepper after cooking.

Other popular toppings are red and green peppers, or perhaps olives. Anchovies can also be used to add flavour and variation.

Pizzas with pepperoni and other meats are popular in some areas.