

Pizza from Scratch

Ingredients

- 1 package active dry yeast
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 cup warm water, 105 to 115 degrees
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tbl extra-virgin olive oil

Directions

- In a small bowl, dissolve the yeast and sugar in 1/4 cup warm water.
- In a mixer fitted with a dough hook, combine the flour and the salt. Add the oil, the yeast mixture, and the remaining 3/4 cup of water and mix on low speed until the dough comes cleanly away from the sides of the bowl and clusters around the dough hook (about 5 minutes).
- Turn the dough out onto a clean work surface and knead by hand 2 or 3 minutes longer. The dough should be smooth and firm. Cover the dough with a clean damp towel and let it rise in a warm spot for about 30 minutes (when ready, the dough will stretch as it is lightly pulled).
- Divide the dough into 4 balls, about 6 ounces each. Work each ball by pulling down the sides and tucking under the bottom of the ball. Repeat 4 or 5 times. Then on a smooth unfloured surface, roll the ball under the palm of your hand until the top of the dough is smooth and firm (about 1 minute). Cover the dough with a damp towel and let rest 15 to 20 minutes. At this point, the balls can be wrapped in plastic and refrigerated for up to 2 days.
- Place a pizza stone on the middle rack of the oven and preheat the oven to 500 degrees.
- To prepare each pizza, dip the ball of dough into flour; shake off the excess flour; place the dough on a clean lightly floured surface and start to stretch the dough. Press down on the center, spreading the dough into an 8-inch circle, with the outer border a little thicker than the inner circle. If you find this difficult to do, use a small rolling pin to roll out the dough. Lightly brush the inner circle of the dough with oil and arrange the topping of your choice over the inner circle.
- Slide the pizza onto the baking stone and bake until the pizza crust is nicely browned (about 10 to 12 minutes). Remember that the oven is very hot and be careful as you place the pizza into and out of the oven. Transfer the pizza to a firm surface and cut into slices with a pizza cutter or very sharp knife.
- Serve immediately.