

KITCHEN & SPICE

and other things nice



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Mozzarella and Chive-Basil Pesto Pizza

Makes 4 (6- to 8-inch) pizzas

Adding chives to this pesto makes it a brilliant green, just like the green color in the Italian flag. Plus it makes for a smooth and creamy pesto. Make it ahead of time when basil and chives are in season. Label and store in your freezer for up to 6 months. You can use store-bought pesto, if you prefer.

For the Chive-Basil Pesto:

- 1 cup roughly chopped onion or garlic chives
- 1 cup packed fresh basil leaves
- 1/4 cup walnut halves or pieces, toasted
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3/4 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
- Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the Pizza:

- 1 recipe Classic Pizza Dough (see below)
- All-purpose flour for rolling out and dusting
- Extra-virgin olive oil for brushing
- 4 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese, thinly sliced

Prepare an indirect medium-hot fire in our grill, with heat on one side and no heat on the other.

For the chive-basil pesto, in a food processor, process the chives, basil, walnuts, and garlic to a fine paste. Slowly add the olive oil in a steady stream until the pesto is creamy and then add the cheese and pulse again. Adjust the seasonings to taste.

Divide the dough into 4 portions. On a floured surface, pat or roll each portion into a 6- to 8-inch diameter circle.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Brush olive oil into a circle that's a little larger than your pizza, and then place your pizza on the oiled circle. Brush the top of the pizza with olive oil.

Lift the pizza by holding the ends of the parchment paper. At a height of about 6 inches above the grill, flip the circle of dough onto the hot side of the grill grates. Quickly peel off the parchment and close the lid. Grill the pizza for 2 to 3 minutes, or until it has good grill marks. Turn the pizza with tongs and move it to the indirect side. Spoon 2 to 3 tablespoons of pesto onto the pizza and spread to cover, leaving a 1/2-inch border. Top with one-quarter of the mozzarella. Cover and grill for 2 to 3 minutes, or until the cheese has melted. Repeat the process with the other pizzas and serve.

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Classic Pizza Dough

Make 4 (6-inch) Individual Pizzas

With just a little bit more flour and a little kneading, you've got a sturdier dough that more easily forms the classic pizza circle. For a vegan dough, substitute agave for the honey.

2-1/2 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting and kneading
1-1/4 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons instant or bread machine yeast
1 cup lukewarm water, plus more if needed
1 teaspoon honey
1 tablespoon olive oil

In a medium bowl, stir the flour, salt, and yeast together. Combine the water, honey, and olive oil and stir into the flour mixture until the dough comes together. If the dough is dry, add 1 tablespoon of water at a time until the dough is just moist. Transfer the dough to a floured surface. With the heel of your hand or your knuckles (or both), knead the dough, adding flour as necessary to keep it from sticking, until it is smooth, not sticky, and springs back like a pillow when you make an indentation in the dough with your knuckle, about 4 minutes. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature until doubled in size, about 1 hour. Use immediately, or refrigerate for up to 3 days before baking. Let come to room temperature before using.

VARIATION: Garlic and Herb Pizza Dough. In a small skillet over medium heat on the stovetop, sauté 2 tablespoons of minced garlic in 2 tablespoons of olive oil until golden. Stir in 2 teaspoons of dried Italian herb seasoning. Let cool, then add the garlic mixture to the dough with the water, honey, and olive oil. Proceed with the recipe as directed.

VARIATION: Whole Wheat Pizza Dough. Use 1-1/4 cups of finely ground whole wheat flour and 1-1/4 cups bread flour, and add an extra 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon instant yeast. Let the dough rest for 30 minutes after mixing and before kneading to let the whole wheat flour absorb the liquid. Then proceed with the recipe.

VARIATION: Brick Oven-Style Dough. The lower-protein "00" flour (available online and at Italian markets) lets you roll or hand toss this dough very thinly. Simply substitute "00" flour for the bread flour and continue with this recipe.