



FOOD DRINK AND CONVERSATION
FROM AROUND THE TABLE

Spring Green Pizza

Follow pizza crust directions below.

Pesto, store-bought or recipe below.

1 cup baby spinach leaves

5 asparagus spears steamed but crisp, cut in 1 inch pieces

Pine nuts, toasted

1 large ball (about 3 inches) fresh mozzarella

After you pre-bake the pizza crust, spread with pesto. Top with spinach, asparagus and pine nuts. Slice ball of mozzarella cheese and top the pizza with rounds. Continue with baking instructions found with pizza dough recipe.

Easy Pizza Dough (Thin Crust Pizza) Yields: 2, 14-inch pizzas

1 (1/4 ounce) package active dry yeast

1 cup warm water

1 teaspoon honey

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon olive oil

cornmeal, for sprinkling

Warm water should be about 100 degrees. Stir in honey and yeast. Let stand for 10 minutes, yeast should be foamy. Put flour and salt in a large bowl and whisk together. Add the yeast mixture and stir. Add olive oil and combine.

Using a dough hook or by hand, knead the dough for 10 minutes until it is stiff but smooth and elastic. You should not need much additional flour. If you do, add a teaspoon at a time. Cover the bowl and let it rest in a warm place for 30-60 minutes. I usually fill my sink with 2 inches of hot water, place a dish towel over the bowl and sit it in the water.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees.



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After 30-45 minutes dough should be considerably larger. Split the dough in half. (dough may be frozen, see below) I like to lightly flour a piece of parchment paper, press the dough into a circle on the paper and then place the parchment directly on my pizza stone to par-bake the dough. If you don't have parchment, you can press the dough on a pizza peel sprinkled with cornmeal and transfer to a pizza stone in the oven. OR, just press out the dough directly onto your greased pizza pan or cookie sheet.

Before placing the dough in the oven, prick it with a fork all over to avoid large air pockets. Put the dough in the hot oven for 10 minutes. It should not be brown but it will be firm in the center.

Top the pizza with your favorite sauce and toppings. I suggest brushing the edges with olive oil. Put it back in the oven for 10-20 more minutes or until cheese is bubbly and crust is slightly browned.

FREEZING DOUGH To freeze dough rub olive oil on the round ball of dough and put in individual plastic freezer bags and in the freezer. Let thaw overnight in the fridge or on the counter before using.

Basic Basil Pesto

3 garlic cloves
1/2 cup toasted pine nuts
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
3 cups loosely packed fresh basil
2/3 cup good quality olive oil

With food processor running, drop in garlic and finely chop. Stop motor and



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add nuts, cheese, salt, pepper, and basil, then process until finely chopped. With motor running, add oil slowly, blending until incorporated. Store in a tight container in the fridge for up to a week. Or, put pesto in an ice cube tray and freeze. Store pesto cubes in a frozen bag and use on pasta, chicken and salads throughout the year!