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# Classic Cheese Pizza



After a long day, you sometimes want a standard cheese pizza. An excellent pizza dough, some low-moisture mozzarella cheese, and a quick and easy tomato sauce that strikes the perfect balance between sweet and salty elevate this dish from the ordinary to the spectacular. Fresh herbs are all that's needed to make this dish complete.



## Ingredients

- 1 ball Artisan Pizza Dough
- All-purpose flour, for dusting
- Semolina flour, for dusting
- ¼ cup Basic Pizza Sauce (recipe follows)
- 3 ounces shredded low-moisture mozzarella
- Fresh basil or oregano leaves, for garnishing

## Directions

**Step-1:** The covered dough should be refrigerated for 1–2 hours or until it is cool enough to leave a fingerprint when squeezed but is not frigid. Put one ball of dough on a well-floured work surface. To shape the dough, press it firmly with floured hands, leaving a 1/2-inch border.

**Step-2:** Set a baking steel or big circular cast-iron pizza pan (like a Lodge 15-inch) on the centre rack of your preheated oven and increase the temperature to 500 degrees Fahrenheit. For around thirty minutes, let the pan heat up in the range. If you're using a pizza stone and an outdoor pizza oven, follow the manufacturer's directions for preheating the pizza oven and pizza stone. (Please note that we have only given gas oven cooking instructions since cooking with wood requires more knowledge to regulate the heat.)

**Step-3:** Make a C shape with the edge of your hand, then push down firmly within the dough border to demarcate a ring that is 1/2 inch wide. Gently stretch the dough by lifting it onto the knuckles of both hands and turning it after each stretch so that it keeps its round form. Gently pull the dough until it forms a 10-inch circle of uniform thickness with a slightly thicker outer ring. Allow gravity to aid in the expansion. Form a circle with the dough and lay it on a pizza peel coated with semolina. The sauce should be spread across the dough circle. Layer with mozzarella cheese and sprinkle with basil.

**Step-4:** Lightly shake the peel with the pizza on it to release it. Carefully pry up the pizza's edge with a bench scraper and sprinkle the pizza peel with a combination of semolina and bread flour, using a ratio of 1:1. With swift, decisive motions, transfer the pizza from the carrying surface to the baking sheet in indoor oven or stone in an outdoor pizza oven. Position the peel, so its edge is perpendicular to the pan at an angle of approximately 20 degrees, then swiftly pull back the peel to slide one-half of the pizza onto the pan. To get the last pizza onto the pan, shake the peel from side to side as you draw it back.

**Step-5:** If using a home oven, preheat to 500 degrees Fahrenheit and bake for 3 minutes or until the crust is golden and slightly puffed. Turn the pan around by ninety degrees and turn the broiler on high. If you want a crispier crust and a fully cooked pizza, broil it for 3 to 6 minutes. Cook pizza in an outdoor pizza oven for 2 to 4 minutes, until the centre is set and the crust has raised and charred in areas, rotating pizza 90 degrees with a peel every 20 to 30 seconds.

**Step-6:** A pizza peel moves the pie from the baking sheet to the cutting board. You may use fresh basil or oregano as a garnish and serve it in wedges.

## Classic Cheese Pizza Topping

Tomato sauce is ideal when kept as straightforward as possible. We conducted extensive taste tests using many different types of tomato sauce, including those that had been cooked, raw, canned, and jarred, and ultimately determined that a basic sauce based on Muir Glen Organic Tomato Sauce had the finest flavour. Toss in freshly grated garlic, olive oil, some oregano, salt, and pepper after opening the can. When spread over dough, its acidity and sweet-savoury taste make it the standout of a cheese pizza while allowing the other toppings to take a backseat.

- 1 (15-oz.) can Muir Glen; Organic Tomato Sauce
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 medium garlic cloves, grated on a Microplane
- 1 1/2 tsp. chopped fresh oregano
- 3/4 tsp. fine sea salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper

Combine everything in a bowl and mix well. Make use of right away, or cover and store in the fridge for up to 2 days.

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