

## Kelsey's Essentials Pizza and Flatbreads August 21 2011

Kelsey dives into the essential techniques, ingredients, and variations for pizza, calzones, and flatbreads. Kelsey starts with the perfect base to any of these dishes with the Really Simple Pizza dough. She'll combine two of her favorite dishes into one with a chopped chicken Caesar salad. Next, she tosses the simple dough on a cast iron skillet to make a decadent beet, bacon and herbed goat cheese flatbread. With the same dough she'll show you a cool technique for making a calzone stuffed with three gooey cheeses: ricotta, parmesan, and mozzarella. Finally, a pizzeria favorite - garlic knots. She'll show you how to tie your own knots and coat them in butter, garlic, and parmesan.

### 1. Beet, Bacon and Herbed Goat Cheese Flatbread by Kelsey Nixon

#### Ingredients

- 1 red beet or 2 to 3 baby beets
- 1 yellow beet or 2 to 3 baby beets
- 1/2 cup goat cheese
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary leaves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves, chopped
- 1/4 recipe Simple Pizza Dough, recipe follows
- Flour
- Olive oil, for brushing
- 1/4 cup arugula
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Salt and freshly cracked black pepper
- 1/4 pound bacon (4 slices), cooked crisp

#### Simple Pizza Dough:

- 1 3/4 cups warm water (105 to 110 degrees F)
- 1 envelope active dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting
- 2 teaspoons salt
- Nonstick spray

#### Directions

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Wrap the beets in aluminum foil and roast in the oven until the beets are tender and a paring knife inserted in the center is met with no resistance, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Once cooked, set aside until they are cool enough to handle. Then, using a paper towel, rub the skin off the beets and then cut into moons or dice.



Mix the goat cheese with the rosemary and thyme until combined and set aside.

Gather up the rest of the ingredients and have them at the ready before you grill your bread.

Preheat a cast-iron grill pan, or a grill, to medium-high heat. Turn the dough out onto a floured work surface and stretch and press with your hands to form a thin, rectangular shape. If you need to, pick up the dough and

let the natural weight of the dough stretch itself out. It doesn't need to be perfect, matter of fact it is better when it's not. Once you have the dough in the shape you like, brush one side of the dough with olive oil and lay that side down flat onto the preheated grill. Cook the dough until it is charred and has a crisp texture, about 5 minutes, brush the other side with some oil and then flip the dough and char the second side. Once the bread is charred and cooked, remove it from the grill and assemble the flatbread.

Spread the herbed goat cheese onto the flatbread. Toss the arugula with some lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper and then place it on the flatbread. Top with sliced beets and crispy bacon and another drizzle of olive oil. Cut the flatbread and serve.

Cook's Notes: The time for baking the beets is dependent on the size of the beet. Cook them just until a paring knife can easily be inserted in the flesh. Baking your bacon in the oven on a sheet tray with a wire rack is a great way to create crispy evenly cooked bacon.

In a liquid measuring cup, combine the warm water, yeast and sugar. Allow the yeast to dissolve and bloom, about 5 minutes. Once bloomed, add the olive oil.

Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the flour and salt. Stream in the water/yeast mixture and as the dough begins to come together, switch to a dough hook attachment. Allow the dough to knead, adding a bit more flour if needed, so that the dough releases from the sides of the bowl, 1 to 3 minutes. You should be able to touch the dough and not have the dough stick to your fingers. Once the dough has kneaded and has pulled away from the sides of the bowl, remove the dough from bowl to a floured work surface and, with floured hands, continue to knead it by hand for 1 to 2 minutes. Then form the dough into a round ball and place it into a large bowl sprayed with nonstick spray. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a clean dish towel and let the dough rise in a warm area of your kitchen until it doubles in size, 1 1/2 to 2 hours. After the dough has risen it is ready to be cooked however you'd like!

Cook's Notes: This dough is wet dough, keep bench flour at the ready and make sure to flour your hands when working with the dough. Trust your gut as a chef, if the dough is to wet, add more flour, if it is too stiff, add a little water.

Sugar is used to feed the yeast which will help the dough to grow. Bread flour will give you a chewier texture because the flour has more gluten. You don't need to use a thermometer to get the water temperature, it should just feel warm to the touch.

## 2. Buttery Garlic Herb Knots by Kelsey Nixon

### Ingredients

1/2 recipe Simple Pizza Dough, recipe follows  
16 tablespoons (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature  
2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves, minced  
2 tablespoons fresh rosemary leaves, minced  
3/4 cup grated Parmesan, divided  
10 cloves garlic, grated  
Bench flour  
2 teaspoons kosher salt

### Simple Pizza Dough:

1 3/4 cups warm water (105 to 110 degrees F)  
1 envelope active dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)  
2 teaspoons sugar  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
4 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting  
2 teaspoons salt  
Nonstick spray

### Directions



Prepare the recipe for Simple Pizza Dough. While the dough is rising, prepare the remaining ingredients for the garlic knots and preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Mix the butter with the thyme, rosemary, 2 tablespoons Parmesan and garlic.

Turn the risen dough out onto a floured surface. Stretch the dough into a rectangle. Spread half of the butter mixture on half of the dough. Then fold the dough in half, covering the butter with the dough.

Using a pizza wheel, divide the dough into 18 strips. First cut through the middle, then you can cut each half into 9 pieces. Stretch each strip and tie into a knot and tuck the ends underneath the center of the knot. Place the knots onto a baking sheet.

Sprinkle the knots with some of the Parmesan and bake until golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan over low heat, melt the remaining herb butter.

Once the knots come out of the oven, baste them with the melted butter and sprinkle them with the remaining Parmesan. Serve warm and enjoy!

In a liquid measuring cup, combine the warm water, yeast and sugar. Allow the yeast to dissolve and bloom, about 5 minutes. Once bloomed, add the olive oil.

Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the flour and salt. Stream in the water/yeast mixture and as the dough begins to come together, switch to a dough hook attachment. Allow the dough to knead, adding a bit more flour if needed, so that the dough releases from the sides of the bowl, 1 to 3 minutes. You should be able to touch the dough and not have the dough stick to your fingers. Once the dough has kneaded and has pulled away from the sides of the bowl, remove the dough from bowl to a floured work surface and, with floured hands, continue to knead it by hand for 1 to 2 minutes. Then form the dough into a round ball and place it into a large bowl sprayed with nonstick spray. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a clean dish towel and let the dough rise in a warm area of your kitchen until it doubles in size, 1 1/2 to 2 hours. After the dough has risen it is ready to be cooked however you'd like!

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### 3. Shrimp, Artichoke and Fresh Ricotta Flatbread by Kelsey Nixon

#### Ingredients

2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1/4 pound shrimp (16/20,) peeled, deveined, tails off  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley  
1/4 recipe Simple Pizza Dough, recipe follows  
Flour  
Olive oil  
1/2 cup ricotta cheese  
1 tablespoon chopped oregano, plus more for garnish

1/4 cup marinated artichokes, chopped  
1/4 cup roasted red pepper, chopped  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper

#### Simple Pizza Dough:

1 3/4 cups warm water (105 to 110 degrees F)  
1 envelope active dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)  
2 teaspoons sugar  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
4 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting  
2 teaspoons salt  
Nonstick spray

#### Directions



Preheat a cast-iron grill pan or outdoor grill to high heat.

Melt the butter in a sauté pan over medium heat, add the shrimp and garlic and sauté until the shrimp are pink and cooked through, about 2 minutes. Toss the shrimp with the chopped parsley. Set aside to cool and then chop the shrimp.

Turn the dough out onto a floured work surface and stretch and press with your hands to form a thin, rectangular shape. If you need to, pick up the dough and let the natural weight of the dough stretch itself out. It doesn't need to be perfect, matter of fact its better when it's not. Once you have the dough in the shape you like, brush one side of the dough with olive oil and lay that side down flat onto the preheated grill. Cook the dough until it is charred and has a crisp texture, about 5 minutes, brush the other side with some oil and then flip the dough and char the second side. Once the bread is charred and cooked, remove it from the grill and assemble the flatbread.

Spread the ricotta onto the flatbread and sprinkle the oregano over the entire surface. Top with the artichokes, red peppers and shrimp and sprinkle the entire thing with lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper. Serve and enjoy!

In a liquid measuring cup, combine the warm water, yeast and sugar. Allow the yeast to dissolve and bloom, about 5 minutes. Once bloomed, add the olive oil.

Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the flour and salt. Stream in the water/yeast mixture and as the dough begins to come

together, switch to a dough hook attachment. Allow the dough to knead, adding a bit more flour if needed, so that the dough releases from the sides of the bowl, 1 to 3 minutes. You should be able to touch the dough and not have the dough stick to your fingers. Once the dough has kneaded and has pulled away from the sides of the bowl, remove the dough from bowl to a floured work surface and, with floured hands, continue to knead it by hand for 1 to 2 minutes. Then form the dough into a round ball and place it into a large bowl sprayed with nonstick spray. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a clean dish towel and let the dough rise in a warm area of your kitchen until it doubles in size, 1 1/2 to 2 hours. After the dough has risen it is ready to be cooked however you'd like!

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#### 4. Simple Pizza Dough by Kelsey Nixon

##### Ingredients

1 3/4 cups warm water (105 to 110 degrees F)  
1 envelope active dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)  
2 teaspoons sugar  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
4 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting  
2 teaspoons salt  
Nonstick spray

##### Directions

In a liquid measuring cup, combine the warm water, yeast and sugar. Allow the yeast to dissolve and bloom, about 5 minutes. Once bloomed, add the olive oil.

Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the flour and salt. Stream in the water/yeast mixture and as the dough begins to come together, switch to a dough hook attachment. Allow the dough to knead, adding a bit more flour if needed, so that the dough releases from the sides of the bowl, 1 to 3 minutes. You should be able to touch the dough and not have the dough stick to your fingers. Once the dough has kneaded and has pulled away from the sides of the bowl, remove the dough from bowl to a floured work surface and, with floured hands, continue to knead it by hand for 1 to 2 minutes. Then form the dough into a round ball and place it into a large bowl sprayed with nonstick spray. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a clean dish towel and let the dough rise in a warm area of your kitchen until it doubles in

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## 5. Three Cheese Caprese Calzone by Kelsey Nixon

### Ingredients

#### Balsamic Glaze:

1/2 cup balsamic vinegar  
3 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

#### Dough:

Olive oil, for brushing  
Simple Pizza Dough, recipe follows

#### Toppings:

1 cup ricotta cheese  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
8 ounces shredded mozzarella  
1 pint cherry heirloom tomatoes, halved  
Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper  
1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, torn  
Tomato Sauce, for serving, recipe follows

#### Simple Pizza Dough:

1 3/4 cups warm water (105 to 110 degrees F)  
1 envelope active dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)  
2 teaspoons sugar  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
4 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting  
2 teaspoons salt  
Nonstick spray

#### Tomato Sauce:

2 tablespoons olive oil  
1/2 onion, minced  
1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomato  
2 cloves garlic, grated  
Pinch sugar  
Red pepper flakes, as needed  
Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper  
Fresh basil leaves, torn

#### Directions



For the glaze: Add the balsamic vinegar and Worcestershire to a small saucepan and simmer over medium heat until thickened and coats the back of a spoon, 3 to 5 minutes.

For the dough: Preheat the oven to 500 degrees F. Grease 2 baking sheets with olive oil.

Prepare the pizza dough according to the recipe. Divide the dough into 4 equal portions.

On a floured work surface, using a rolling pin, roll each piece of dough into a circle. Place the circles onto the prepared baking sheets.

For the toppings: Place 1/4 of the ricotta, Parmesan, mozzarella and tomatoes on the bottom half of each of the rounds. Season the filling with salt and pepper, tear some basil leaves over the cheese and tomatoes and drizzle with a spoonful of the balsamic glaze.

Fold the dough rounds in half to resemble a half-moon shape, covering the filling with the dough. Starting at one end of the half-moon, begin to fold the dough over on itself pressing down as you go. Continue to fold the dough until you reach the end and then tuck the final end under and pinch it shut.

Brush the calzones with some more olive oil and, with the tip of a knife, make 2 slits in each calzone so the steam can escape.

Bake the calzones until the crust is golden and crisp, about 15 minutes.

Cook's Note: Cutting slits in the top of the calzone will prevent the calzone from leaking and let the steam escape. You can fill this calzone with whatever you like.

In a liquid measuring cup, combine the warm water, yeast and sugar. Allow the yeast to dissolve and bloom, about 5 minutes. Once bloomed, add the olive oil.

Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the flour and salt. Stream in the water/yeast mixture and as the dough begins to come together, switch to a dough hook attachment. Allow the dough to knead, adding a bit more flour if needed, so that the dough releases from the sides of the bowl, 1 to 3 minutes. You should be able to touch the dough and not have the dough stick to your fingers. Once the dough has kneaded and has pulled away from the sides of the bowl, remove the dough from bowl to a floured work surface and, with floured hands, continue to knead it by hand for 1 to 2 minutes. Then form the dough into a round ball and place it into a large bowl sprayed with nonstick spray. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a clean dish towel and let the dough rise in a warm area of your kitchen until it doubles in size, 1 1/2 to 2 hours. After the dough has risen it is ready to be cooked however you'd like!

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Heat a medium saucepan to medium-high. Add in the olive oil. Saute the onions until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add in the tomatoes, garlic, sugar, red pepper flakes and season with salt and pepper. Continue cooking for 10 to 15 minutes on medium low. Season with salt and pepper and fold in the basil.

## 6. Chopped Caesar Salad Pizza by Kelsey Nixon

### Ingredients

1/2 recipe Simple Pizza Dough, recipe follows  
Olive oil, for brushing crust  
8 ounces mozzarella, sliced  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan, plus small chunk for shaving  
1 chicken breast, grilled and sliced thinly  
2 romaine hearts, washed and dried, cut into 1/2-inch pieces  
1/2 cup Caesar Salad Dressing, recipe follows  
Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper

### Caesar Salad Dressing:

1/2 cup grated Parmesan  
1/3 cup mayonnaise  
1/4 cup lemon juice  
2 tablespoons olive oil

2 teaspoons Dijon mustard  
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper  
2 cloves garlic, minced or grated  
1 anchovy fillet, rinsed and dried

#### Simple Pizza Dough:

1 3/4 cups warm water (105 to 110 degrees F)  
1 envelope active dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)  
2 teaspoons sugar  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
4 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting  
2 teaspoons salt  
Nonstick spray

#### Directions



Prepare the Simple Pizza Dough according to recipe.

Preheat the oven to 500 degrees F.

On a baking sheet brushed liberally with olive oil, stretch the dough to desired shape and thickness. Brush the crust with olive oil and top with the mozzarella slices. Bake the pizza until the dough crisps up and cheese is melted, about 15 minutes.

Remove the pizza from oven. Top the melted mozzarella with the grated Parmesan and sliced chicken. Toss the romaine hearts with the Caesar Salad Dressing and season with salt and pepper. Top the pizza with the Caesar salad and shave over some Parmesan. Serve and enjoy!

Cook's Note: If you don't have a pizza stone at home, no worries, use a well-oiled sheet tray and a hot oven to achieve a crisp bottom on your pizza! Also place the dough on the very bottom rack of your oven. It will help to create that crispy crust.

In a blender or food processor, process the Parmesan, mayonnaise, lemon juice, olive oil, mustard, Worcestershire, salt, pepper, garlic and anchovy until emulsified and smooth. Refrigerate until ready to use.

In a liquid measuring cup, combine the warm water, yeast and sugar. Allow the yeast to dissolve and bloom, about 5 minutes. Once bloomed, add the olive oil.

Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the flour and salt. Stream in the water/yeast mixture and as the dough begins to come together, switch to a dough hook attachment. Allow the dough to knead, adding a bit more flour if needed, so that the dough releases from the sides of the bowl, 1 to 3 minutes. You should be able to touch the dough and not have the dough stick to your fingers. Once the dough has kneaded and has pulled away from the sides of the bowl, remove the dough from bowl to a floured work surface and, with floured hands, continue to knead it by hand for 1 to 2 minutes. Then form the dough into a round ball and place it into a large bowl sprayed with nonstick spray. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a clean dish towel and let the dough rise in a warm area of your kitchen until it doubles in size, 1 1/2 to 2 hours. After the dough has risen it is ready to be cooked however you'd like!

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