



Apple Anise Pizza

You may know The Gilded Fork for our more refined recipes, but we love pizza here as well! There's a reason it's the most popular food in America. However, we have to put our own imprint on every recipe, so this sweet and savory pizza will satisfy your craving for a spicy, licorice flavor. The honeyed apples stay crisp enough to give the pizza some texture, while the ooey-goey melted cheese blends with the anise seeds to satisfy.

Number of servings: Yields 1 12-inch or 2 8-inch pizzas

Ingredients

For the crust:

½ cup warm water (105° F to 115° F)
½ cup warm milk
1 teaspoon honey
1 envelope dry yeast
2 ½ cups bread flour
1 ½ teaspoons olive oil
1 ½ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon anise seeds, slightly crushed

Olive oil for greasing bowl

A few teaspoons cornmeal for sprinkling on the pizza stone or baking dish

For the topping:

2 Granny Smith apples, cored, quartered and thinly sliced
2 Tablespoons olive oil
2 shallots, thinly sliced
2 teaspoons anise seeds, divided
¼ cup walnuts, chopped
¼ cup honey
1 cup Gruyère, shredded
A pinch of salt
A pinch of pepper
Honey for drizzling

Equipment

Kitchen stand mixer
Pizza stone or large round baking sheet
Pizza cutter

Preparation

Prepare the crust:

Combine the warm water, milk and honey in a small bowl. Sprinkle the yeast over the liquid; let stand until the yeast dissolves and the liquid begins to appear foamy, about 8-10 minutes. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook, combine the flour, salt and anise seed. Add the oil and yeast mixture, and mix on low speed until incorporated. Increase the speed to medium and continue to mix, kneading the dough until smooth and it pulls away from the sides of the bowl, about 5 minutes.

Turn the dough out onto a clean work surface, and knead by hand until smooth and firm, about 2 to 3 minutes. Grease a medium bowl with the extra olive oil. Transfer the dough to the bowl, turning to coat

May 2006

in the oil, and cover with a clean, damp kitchen towel. Place bowl in a warm spot, and let rise until doubled in volume, about 1 ½ hours.

Chill the dough in the refrigerator for several hours or up to two days.

Prepare the pizza:

Preheat the oven to 450° F.

Remove the dough from the refrigerator about 20 minutes before you are ready to bake. Punch the dough down and lightly form the dough into a ball again and then stretch it out, first, by holding it vertically by one edge and turning it in your hands. Sprinkle some cornmeal evenly over the pizza stone or baking sheet, lay the dough on top and then work the dough into a rough circle, starting by pressing from the center. Be careful not to tear or poke holes in the dough. If the dough springs back, let it rest for a few minutes, then continue to stretch it out to about 1/3 to ½ inch thick. Cover the dough with a damp towel and let rest for 15 to 20 minutes while you prepare the topping ingredients.

Pour the honey into a large bowl and toss with the apples.

Spread the 2 Tablespoons of olive oil over the surface of the pizza crust, then sprinkle with salt and pepper, 1 teaspoon of the anise seeds, and scatter the shallot slices and half of the walnuts on top. Bake for about 5 minutes in the preheated oven. Remove pizza from the oven after 5 minutes and sprinkle ½ cup of the cheese over the shallots; neatly arrange the apple mixture on top of the cheese, layering the apples starting from the outer edge working inward in a circular fashion, then finish by topping with the rest of the cheese, walnuts, and 1 teaspoon anise seeds. Return to the oven, and bake another 10-12 minutes, until the crust starts to brown and the cheese is melted and bubbly.

[Chef's Note: Keeping the dough in the refrigerator overnight is only an optional step. You can make the pizza after the first rising, but we prefer to let the dough mature in the refrigerator, ripening and relaxing the gluten to obtain the perfect chewy yet crispy crust. The dough also becomes less sticky, easier to stretch, and usually has a better flavor after refrigeration, too. Feel free to substitute store-bought fresh pizza dough if you lack the time to make your own.]

Service

To serve, let the pizza rest for 5 minutes after removing from the oven. If using a pizza stone, slide the pizza onto a cookie sheet or transfer it with spatulas to a cutting board. Cut into even wedge-shaped slices with a pizza wheel, drizzle with extra honey and serve immediately.

Copyright © 2006 The Gilded Fork™. Recipe by Monica Glass. All rights reserved.

May 2006