



Forno Bravo

Authentic Italian Wood-Fired Ovens

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Pizza Stone Pizza

You can cook great pizza on your Forno Bravo pizza stone. The key to success is to get your pizza stone hot. That means setting your oven to its highest heat -- typically 525F-550F, and heating your pizza stone for at least 45 minutes before you start cooking. More if you want to cook for a long period. Remember that you are essentially "storing" heat in the pizza stone, and that you will be removing heat each time you cook a pizza. The more you cook, the more you remove. Also, it is important to note that even though the air in your oven might be over 500F, it takes time for the stone to fully heat up.

If you have convection, use it. Many Italian ovens actually have a pizza pre-set button (I think that's great), which is the highest heat from the top and bottom burners, and the fastest convection setting.

You will need two tools to make, place and remove your pizza: wooden peel to prepare and set your pizzas, and either a metal peel, or a large metal spatula to remove them. If you are going to throw a pizza party, have 3-4 wood peels on hand so that your guests can be making their pizzas all at the same time. As base of a cooked pizza becomes crisp, it is easier to take your pizza out with a metal tool than a wooden one. The handle of your metal peel should be longer than a regular spatula to safely remove your pizzas from the hot oven.

Using the Forno Bravo guides to Caputo Tipo 00 Flour and San Marzano DOP Tomatoes, make your pizza dough balls and tomato sauce, and you are ready to start. Dust your hands with flour, and take a pizza ball. Flip it over so that the soft bottom side faces up, gently shape the ball into a flat disk, and then start pulling, stretching and turning the disk in the air to make the dough thinner and thinner. Keep working in a circle to keep the thickness of the dough consistent, avoiding thick and thin spots. At the point where you cannot get the dough thinner without making a hole, put your pizza on a floured wooden peel, and use your fingertips to work out the thick spots by pushing the dough to the outside. Make your pizzas about as thick as a credit card and about 10" in diameter.

Remember that the more you handle the dough, the tougher it becomes. Don't use a rolling pin, which is hard on the dough and will give you a thin, but tough pizza. Try to shape your dough in the air as much as possible, before you lay it on the counter -- it will enjoy not being over-handled, and will reward you with a pizza that is both crisp and delicate.

Place your shaped pizza base on a flour dusted pizza peel (don't use cornmeal -- it's gritty and burns). Using a spoon spread just enough tomato sauce to lightly cover the base. You should be able to see the dough through the sauce. Sprinkle on a handful of chopped Mozzarella, then pour on olive oil in a circular pattern. Add a little salt and oregano.

Test to make sure your pizza is not stuck on your peel by moving the peel forward and backward using short jerks - it should slide easily around. If it does stick, lift it up on one side using your fingers, and throw a little flour underneath. Slide your peel back and forth, and that should loosen the pizza up.

If your pizzas consistently stick to the peel, use more flour underneath your pizza dough before you start decorating. Also, if you have a group of people assembling pizzas, and one sits for a while before you place it in the oven, take care, there is a large chance it will stick. To place your pizza, push your peel toward your pizza peel, then stop it short just short of the back edge, allowing the pizza to slide off the peel. Pull the peel backward as the pizza slides forward.

The perfect pizza is bubbling on top with completely melted (and possibly slightly browned) cheese, has a brown outer crust, and a dark brown bottom. The crust is crunchy on the outside and soft and delicate on the inside. Everything is steaming hot. Throw on some fresh chopped basil and cut your pizza into eight pieces with a pizza wheel. Salute.