



Focaccia

Focaccia is a great bread for having with an Italian supper, it can also be used as the base for a pizza. Authentic focaccia is sprinkled with sea salt, rosemary and olive oil before going into the oven but this is a very flexible dough! It can be used as a base for pizza or made into stuffed flatbread.

Ingredients

500g strong white bread flour
7g sachet of powdered active yeast
10g fine salt
325ml warm water
About 1 tbsp olive oil plus extra for coating

To Finish

A generous drizzle of olive oil
A sprinkle of flaky sea salt
A couple of rosemary sprigs, leaves stripped and finely chopped.

To Make

Mix the flour, yeast, salt and water in a bowl to form a sticky dough. The water should only be warm not hot or it will kill the yeast and the bread will not rise.
Add the oil, mix it into the sticky dough and then turn it all out onto a clean work surface.
Knead the dough for about ten minutes until it is smooth and silky.
If you gently push your finger into the dough and it rises back into shape you know you have kneaded enough.
Shape the dough into a round and coat with a little of the extra olive oil.
Leave to rise in a clean bowl, covered with a plastic bag or lid.

When it has doubled in size tip it back onto the work surface and press it into a rectangle shape, it doesn't need to be perfect - this is a rustic bread!

Place it in a lightly oiled baking tray measuring about 26cm x 36cm.

Press the dough with your fingers so it goes right into the corners.

Cover it again and leave to rise for about half an hour.

Preheat the oven to 250 degrees centigrade or gas mark 10.

When the bread looks puffy and airy poke it with your fingertips making deep holes across the whole surface almost to the bottom of the baking tray.

Drizzle with the oil, add the salt and rosemary.

Bake for about 10 minutes, then turn the oven down to 200 degrees centigrade or gas mark 6 and bake for a further 10 minutes.

Focaccia is best if you eat it warm - not hot!. Leave it to cool on a wire rack for about 10 minutes before serving or eat it when it's completely cold.

Stuffed Flatbread

Time to get creative - this recipe uses mustard seeds and caramelised onions but what would you do? Let your imagination run wild!



Fry some mustard seeds until they start to pop, then turn the heat down, add some thinly sliced onions in a little olive oil and cook until they caramelize.



While this is happening take some of the dough after it's second rise, divide into small portions and roll into balls.



When it's had time to cool, add some of the onion mix to each portion of dough pushing them down into the centre.



Gently pull and wrap the dough over the onions. Carefully turn over and place on a floured surface.



Gently roll out into a round flat bread. If some of the onion escapes not to worry.



Fry in a pan with a little olive oil starting with the 'perfect' side and then flipping over to cook the 'folded' side.



Can be stored in a freezer and popped into a toaster to heat through.