

Whole Wheat Pizza Crust (Nut-Free, Soy-Free)

Paul England of Cookies, Etc based his crust below on the Herbed Whole Wheat Pizza with Mushrooms and Spinach on page 134-136 of the King Arthur Flour Whole Grain Baking: Delicious Recipes Using Nutritious Whole Grains cookbook.

Makes 2 12-inch rounds

Ingredients:

- 3 3/4 cups (15 oz.) white whole wheat flour (I used the King Arthur Organic Whole Wheat)
- 1 Tbls. + 1 1/2 tsp. instant yeast
- 1 1/2 cups (12 oz) cool water
- 1 Tbls. honey
- 1 Tbls. olive oil
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 Tbls. dried oregano
- 1 Tbls. dried basil
- 1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper

In a medium bowl put 2 cups of the flour and all of the yeast. Measure out the water and add to that the honey and stir until it's combined. Add the water-honey mixture to the flour and yeast and mix thoroughly. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let sit for an hour.

After the hour, remove the plastic wrap and add in the remaining ingredients and mix. Remove the dough from the bowl and knead on a lightly floured surface for 5 minutes or so. Stop kneading when the dough is shiny and elastic yet soft. Have a baker's bench knife handy to help if the dough sticks because you don't want to over-flour this. Put the dough back into the bowl, cover, and let sit for another 90 minutes. After about 90 minutes the dough should have doubled in size.

Once this second rise is done, turn the dough out onto the lightly floured surface. Divide the dough in half and form each half into a round. Cover these rounds and let them rest for another 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 375° F (with a baking stone if that is what you use). Roll each round out to a 12-inch round and put on your pan, baking sheet, or parchment paper. Use a fork to prick the crust all over (if you look at the first picture you will see the dough puffed up; I missed this step the first time through). If you want a traditional end crust, roll up the edges. Bake the crusts individually for 10 minutes and remove from the oven.

At this point you have 2 crusts for use. Use immediately or let cool completely and freeze. When you add your toppings and bake, bake the pizza at 425° F.