



Tomato & Basil Pizza

Season: Summer/Autumn

Type: Big Dishes

Difficulty: Intermediate

Serves: 30 tastes in the classroom
or 8 at home

Fresh from the garden: basil, garlic, tomatoes

Recipe source: Adapted from Stephanie Alexander's *Kitchen Garden Cooking with Kids* (Penguin Lantern 2006)

This is a classic pizza topping using 'best friends' tomato and basil. While they are usually in season at the same time, if you don't have fresh tomatoes you can use preserved ones, even tomato sauce; you could also use pesto rather than fresh basil if you are craving this pizza in cooler months.

Equipment:

salad spinner
tea towels
kitchen paper
chopping board
grater
peeler
vegetable-slicing gadget
such as a mandoline
large bowl

Ingredients:

4 large tomatoes or 8 small
large handful basil
1 garlic clove
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
salt and freshly ground black
pepper, to taste
1 quantity pizza dough



What to do:

- Slice the tomatoes thinly.
- Tear up the basil leaves.
- Mince the garlic clove.
- Shave off pieces of parmesan using either a grater (if it has a wide slicing option) or a vegetable peeler.
- Tip the sliced tomatoes into the large bowl and drizzle with most of the oil.
- Add the salt, pepper and garlic, and mix together so all the slices are lightly oiled.
- Scatter some flour on the workbench and roll the dough to form a thin disc about 26 cm in diameter.

If you are using a pizza tray:

- You can assemble the pizza directly onto the tray (again, flour the tray first).
- Arrange the slices of tomato on the pizza, overlapping them.
- Sprinkle most of the parmesan and most of the basil over the top, keeping some aside.
- If you are using a pizza tray, drizzle the pizza with the last of the oil, then place the pizza in the oven.





If you are using a pizza stone:

- Place the pizza stone on a rack in the oven to get very hot.
- You will first have to assemble the pizza on a light piece of wood – called a peel – or an upside-down baking tray (you don't want any edges that could prevent the prepared dough slipping easily onto the preheated stone). Flour the tray first.
- Place the rolled-out pizza dough onto either the floured pizza tray or wooden peel (or an upside-down baking tray) – whichever you are using.
- Arrange the slices of tomato on the pizza, overlapping them.
- Sprinkle most of the parmesan and most of the basil over the top, keeping some aside.
- ***Carefully pull out the rack with the very hot pizza stone.**
- Being careful not to touch the hot pizza stone, scatter the pizza stone with semolina, then firmly shake and slide the pizza from the wooden peel or baking tray onto the stone, and drizzle with the last of the oil.

Baking the pizza:

- Bake the pizza for 15 minutes or until the edges are very crusty and the cheese is bubbling.
- If you are using a pizza tray, you may want to slip the pizza off the tray onto the rack for the last few minutes, so that you get a really crusty base.
- Once the pizza is done, transfer it to the board using the wide egg lifter.
- Cut the pizza into portions – enough for a taste for every diner.
- Serve topped with the remaining parmesan and basil.

