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BAKE!

The world of baking according to
SILVIA COLLOCA



NEAPOLITAN-STYLE CALZONE DIAVOLA

Calzone is a folded pizza that originated in Naples. The word literally means ‘pants’ or ‘long stocking’, though on closer inspection a calzone resembles neither. However, I believe its name is related to the Italian tradition, *Epifania*, which wraps up the Christmas festivities. On the eve of January 6th, a good witch called Befana leaves her humble dwelling on Mount Vesuvius, rides her broomstick and visits the homes of good children, filling their stockings with lollies and treats. This would explain, albeit very loosely, how the calzone got its name: it is, by some stretch of the imagination, like a stocking stuffed with goodies!

1 quantity of Neapolitan-style pizza dough (see page 96)
 plain flour, for dusting
 semolina, for dusting
 160 g (1 cup) cherry tomatoes, halved
 250 g (1 ¼ cups) fresh ricotta, well drained
 150 g tomato passata (or crushed canned tomatoes), plus two tablespoons extra for topping
 80 g spicy salami, cut into small chunks
 salt
 extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling

Make and rest the dough as instructed, then divide it into two balls.

Preheat your oven to its hottest setting (mine goes up to 250°C). Place a 25 cm pizza tray or round baking tray in the oven to heat up.

Place a ball of dough on a lightly floured surface. Using your fingers (not a rolling pin, as you want to avoid crushing the air bubbles that have formed during fermentation), stretch the dough into a 20–22 cm round. Place the stretched dough on a sheet of baking paper dusted with semolina.

Place half the tomato, ricotta, passata and salami on one half of the dough. Season with salt and drizzle with a little olive oil. Fold the other half of the dough over and tuck and pinch the edges to seal, enclosing the filling. Dollop on 1 tablespoon extra of passata and spread with the back of the spoon. Drizzle a little olive oil over the top and season with salt.

Using oven mitts, carefully take the hot tray out of the oven. Slide the calzone (on its baking paper) onto the tray and immediately return it to the oven. Do this as quickly as you can to avoid losing heat. Bake for 15 minutes, then open the oven door and carefully remove the baking paper. Quickly close the oven door and bake for a further 5–7 minutes or until the crust is nicely puffed up and slightly burnished.

Take the calzone out of the oven, slide it onto a board and serve hot. Repeat with the second ball of dough and remaining filling ingredients to make a second calzone.

MAKES 2

NEAPOLITAN-STYLE PIZZA DOUGH, THREE WAYS

Neapolitan-style pizza is fast becoming a favourite among Australians. I believe the reason for this is the quality of the crust. It's made with a simple dough that is slowly fermented to create lots of air pockets that expand when baked in a very hot oven, creating a feather-light, pillowy crust that tastes amazing and is easy to digest.

For best results you need a really hot oven. These pizzas are traditionally baked in a wood-fired oven, at 350–400°C, but of course we can't achieve anything like those temperatures in a domestic oven. Our best bet is to try to gather as much heat as possible in other ways. Preheating the pizza tray is a good way to start, so that when you add the uncooked pizza it starts baking straight away. Another way is to use a combination of the functions your oven offers, such as the one that heats both the top and bottom elements, as well as the grill function. Every oven is different and only you will know exactly how long it will take to bake your pizza to perfection, but ramp up the heat and give it a go. There may be a little trial and error along the way, but I am sure once you've nailed it you will be very happy with the results.

NEAPOLITAN-STYLE PIZZA DOUGH

½ teaspoon dried yeast
275 ml lukewarm water
450 g (3 cups) plain, 00 or
baker's flour, plus extra for dusting
3 teaspoons salt flakes

VEGAN

Mix the yeast and water in a bowl and stand for a few minutes to froth up.

Tip the flour into a large bowl, pour in the water mixture and mix until a dough comes together. Add the salt and knead lightly to incorporate. Knead vigorously on a lightly floured surface for up to 10 minutes or until smooth, shiny and elastic. (If you have a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook, by all means use it instead of your muscle power.) Dust with flour, then cover with a damp tea towel and rest for 30 minutes.

Using floured hands, stretch the dough into a rectangle, then fold the top and bottom thirds into the centre, like folding a letter, and tuck the ends under to form a ball. Place in an oiled container fitted with a lid – make sure the container is large enough to allow plenty of room for rising. Cover and rest at room temperature for 2 hours, then place the container in the fridge overnight (or for up to 4 days), to slow-prove and develop flavour and texture.

A couple of hours before you want to use the dough, remove it from the fridge and take off the lid. Cover loosely with a tea towel and leave at room temperature for 2 hours.

