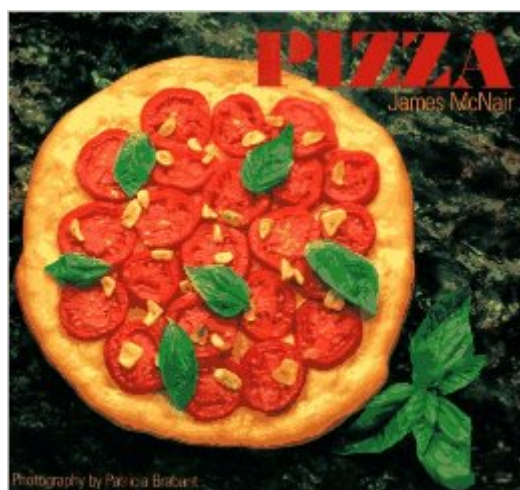


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James McNair's Pizza



Synopsis

A golden crust crowned with garden-ripe tomatoes and basil, redolent of garlic, and flavored with fruity extra-virgin olive oil was created in Naples. This oldest documented pizza recipe, shown on the cover, remains as up to date as any of the innovative toppings that reflect the current gourmet status of the humble pie. From traditional pizzas of Italy, France, New York, and Chicago to the new delicious concoctions popularized in California, Pizza contains a delightful array of mouth-watering recipes. Check out all of James McNair's Chronicle cookbooks!

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (16 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I never figured I'd be able to make a decent pizza at home, until I purchased this book. I was worried a standard home oven could never produce the quality any pizzeria could produce, and that the right equipment and skills wouldn't help. I was wrong. This book offers simple recipes for pizza dough, and how to cook the pizza in your oven, that allows you to come up with something rivaling the local pizzeria. I've followed the instructions, and found the regular recipe produces a nice, high quality crust - and once you have the crust, you can play around with toppings, so you've got most of a good pizza down. I have yet to try the Chicago-style corn crust, as I can't find a deep-dish pizza pan yet. The sauce recipes are not quite as good as the dough recipe, with the one I use most often seeming like it's missing something, perhaps a little sugar, so that's going to be something to play with. To be honest, the interesting history of pizza presented in the book, along with the basics of cooking the pizza, and the supplies you need, are the best part of the book - the other recipes for various toppings do seem like afterthoughts, though a few do get my interest.

I had to write this review to refute the "pretty pizza, no substance" one, written by the angry reader who accused McNair of writing the book to pay off his mortgage. Don't believe a word of that negative commentary. I've been making pizza for years using a brick oven stone and have had lots of success with McNair's ideas. And his ingredients don't seem particularly exotic to me-- what's so mysterious about freshly ground Parmesan cheese? McNair himself recommends substitution if you don't have a particular ingredient on hand, or if you prefer an alternative ingredient taste-wise. I especially like the whole-wheat pizza crust recipe-- I just throw the ingredients into a bread machine and use it for two thin pizzas. I add some mozzarella & cheddar, the New York Neopolitan pizza sauce (very simple) and some garlic and add steamed spinach, basil & Italian flat-leaf parsley and oregano & Parmesan on top, & it's easy & delicious. And according to the kids, "Mommy makes the best pizza in the whole wide world." Thanks, James McNair. I hope you pay off your mortgage and that I pay mine off too someday.

I own several James McNair books, and I find them consistently reliable. Yes, some of the recipes do call for specialized ingredients (Parmigiano Reggiano cheese instead of Kraft Parmesan, for example), but that's just one detail that makes McNair's recipes so much better than many others. I recently made pizza for lunch for some houseguests who were astounded that I could do so from scratch without an awful lot of effort--they had NEVER seen it done at home before. It's not at all difficult, and the results are far superior to anything out of the freezer or thrown at the doorstep by a fast-moving delivery driver. Many of McNair's books are old reliables around my house!

Pizza is one of my favorite foods and this book helps me make really good pizza. Even though this book is old, it's my favorite pizza cookbook. It has enough details for me though over all it's pretty simple. I mainly use it for the tools and dough information. The pictures are enjoyable to look at though I haven't really made many of the recipes. The best part of making pizza according to this book is obtaining the crispy crust via pizza stones in a hot oven (I've probably made 100 pizzas using the simple New York style dough recipe). Here's a hint, if you are on a budget and don't want to buy an expensive pizza stone, you can buy a bunch of six inch square quarry tiles from home depot really cheap. I have 9 in my oven forming a 18 inch square baking surface. I also prepare my pizza on parchment (baking) paper and slide it into the oven on a round tray (so I don't need a pizza peel). This way is cleaner than baking the pizza directly on the stones with cornmeal.

My mother in law and father in law both have this book and we had to have it too! No other book out there covers everything as well as this one does. You can get fantastic Chicago style pizza or a great thin crust! Buy this.

I have owned this book since 1988. James' recipe for basic pizza dough is my "go to recipe". This book has very easy to follow instructions whether using a food processor, stand mixer, or the old fashioned way...kneading by hand!

I have had this book for at least 10 years and have read it word for word. As a neophyte pizza cook, I really appreciate the step by step approach to making dough. My husband, kids and I have made most of the recipes. I recently gave my son, a senior in college, a pizza stone and peel and felt compelled to give him my book. I'm now back on line ordering myself a new copy and getting one for my daughter.

I have had so much fun with this cookbook. My husband now says my pizzas are better than those we buy. Lots of easy recipes. We even invited several neighbors, made three kinds of pizzas and let them go on their favorite. The Margherita one was everyone's first choice.

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