



Grandma Pie with Broccoli Rabe and Sausage

By Susan Spungen

Serves 8 to 10

I first became acquainted with the Grandma Pie, a Long Island specialty, on one of my many trips back and forth between New York City and my place on the eastern end of Long Island. I love pizza, so I was always tempted to stop about halfway home for a slice. The pizza was pretty average at this particular place, but still, it was pizza. One day they had grandma pie, and it was better than average and exactly what I wanted—a nice neat car snack—not too saucy and crisp on the bottom. I continued to ask for it on subsequent trips, but they rarely had it! A big pan of pizza (or two) is a great way to feed a crowd, and happily. If you have vegetarians, it's easy to leave off the meat—you could substitute with well-roasted sliced shiitake mushrooms, which will lend a meatless note of umami.

For the dough:

- 1 ½ teaspoons active dry yeast
- 1 ½ cups warm water
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for the bowl
- 3 to 3 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt

For the pizza:

- 1 (28-ounce) can San Marzano tomatoes, drained and broken up (cores removed and liquid discarded or saved for another use)
- 2 to 3 garlic cloves, chopped (1 heaping tablespoon)

- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 - 6 fresh basil leaves
 - 3/4 teaspoon salt, plus more as needed
 - Red pepper flakes
 - 10 ounces (4 links) hot Italian pork sausage, removed from casings (optional)
 - 1 bunch broccoli rabe, thick stems cut out
 - 1/4 cup olive oil
 - 8 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese, sliced and torn
-

1. To make the dough: In a large liquid measuring cup, dissolve the yeast in the warm water. Stir in the sugar and oil. Combine the flour and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Mix briefly to combine, then slowly pour in the yeast mixture on low speed until well combined. Mix for about 5 minutes, until smooth. Transfer to a very lightly floured surface and knead the dough until smooth and elastic, about 10 times. Form into a ball, then transfer to an oiled bowl. Turn the dough so it's oiled too, wrap tightly with plastic wrap, and refrigerate overnight.
 2. To make the pizza: In a medium bowl, combine the tomatoes, garlic, oregano, basil, and salt and season with red pepper flakes. Set aside.
 3. Heat a large (12-inch) nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add sausage and cook until no longer pink, breaking it up with a wooden spoon as it cooks, 6 to 8 minutes. Remove from the pan and set aside. Meanwhile, wash the broccoli rabe. Drain the broccoli rabe (but not very well; you want it to be dripping wet). Add it to the pan and increase the heat to high. Season lightly with salt and cover. Cook for 2 minutes, tossing once or twice. Remove with tongs to a plate and drain off any extra liquid.
 4. About 1 hour before you want to assemble the pizza, remove the dough from the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 500°F.
 5. Pour the oil into a 13-by-18-inch rimmed baking sheet and spread the dough in the pan. If it pulls back, cover with plastic wrap and let rest for 10 minutes. Spread the dough to fill the entire pan.
 6. Sprinkle on the cheese, followed by the sauce, and then the broccoli rabe and sausage. Place on the bottom rack of the oven (using a preheated pizza stone if you have one—put the pan right on the stone). Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until crisp on the bottom and browned on the edges. Cut into squares and serve immediately.
-

Timing tips:

- Up to 1 day ahead: Make the dough and refrigerate; brown the sausage and cook the broccoli rabe; prepare the tomatoes and store in the fridge.
 - About 1 hour ahead: Prepare the pizza for the oven and bake.
-

Cooking tips:

- Do not fear making a yeast dough! This one is so easy—there is really no way to fail. And it takes less time to make than defrosting a ball of frozen pizza dough!
- Though the instructions say to use a stand mixer to mix the dough, you can definitely do it by hand if you don't mind using a little elbow grease!
- If you have vegetarians on hand, try making [“shiitake bacon”](#) as a topping. Even the carnivores won't mind!
- If the dough resists when you try to spread it out on the pan—and it probably will!—just cover it and let it rest for 10 or 15 minutes then try again.
- The toppings will also help spread out the dough, so if it's not quite spreading to the corners, just add the toppings then nudge it some more.
- If you want to assemble the pizza more than one hour ahead of time, you can! Refrigerate until ready to bake, but expect a slightly puffier pizza.
- Leftovers reheat well, and you can freeze them too. Try it for breakfast with an egg on top! Or for lunch with a salad on top!