PIZZA · ADVANCED

# Sourdough pala-style pizza on the kamado

*A Roman pala-style pizza — long, with a tall, open-crumb edge — leavened with sourdough and baked on steel at 350°C with the deflector in.*

| PREP | COOK | SERVINGS | TEMPERATURE |
|---|---|---|---|
| **60 min** | **8 min** | **4** | **350 °C** |

## Ingredients

- **500 g** strong bread flour W300-330 (or 80% strong + 20% fine semolina)
- **375 ml** room-temperature water (75% hydration)
- **100 g** active sourdough starter (refreshed 4-6 h before, at peak)
- **11 g** sea salt
- **2 cda** extra-virgin olive oil from the Comunidad Valenciana (dough + finish)
- **c/n** coarse semolina for stretching and loading the peel
- **250 g** crushed San Marzano tomato (drained, uncooked)
- **300 g** fior di latte mozzarella, drained 1 h and torn
- **1 manojo** fresh basil (added out of the oven)
- **1 pizca** dried oregano and flaky salt (to taste)

## Method

1 AUTOLYSE AND MIX

Mix the flour with 340 ml of the water and let it rest 40 minutes (autolyse): it hydrates and builds gluten with no effort. Add the sourdough starter, work it in, then add the salt dissolved in the remaining 35 ml and the oil. Knead to a smooth but sticky dough; at 75% hydration you are not after a firm ball.

2 BULK FERMENT

Bulk-ferment at 22-24°C for 4-5 hours, with three rounds of stretch & folds over the first 90 minutes, every 30 minutes. The dough should grow by 50-60% and show bubbles on the surface. With sourdough the dough sets the clock, not the timer: the warmer it is, the sooner it's ready.

3 BALL AND COLD-PROOF 24-48 H

Divide into two dough balls of about 490 g, shape each one tight, and place it in an oiled lidded container. Cold-proof in the fridge for 24-48 hours: this is where the tangy flavour and open crumb develop. Take the balls out 2 hours before baking so they come up to temperature; cold dough won't stretch and tears.

4 SET DEFLECTOR AND PREHEAT STEEL

Light the kamado, set the deflector for indirect heat, and place the grate on top with the carbon-steel plate (or cordierite stone). Settle it at 350°C and preheat the whole stack for at least 40 minutes. Check the surface with an infrared thermometer: it should read 330-350°C, no less. The lid thermometer only measures the air.

5 STRETCH WITHOUT DEGASSING

Tip the dough ball out onto flour and semolina. Stretch with your fingertips from the centre outwards into the long peel shape (about 30x18 cm), pressing the centre but respecting the puffed edge: that open crumb is the soul of pala pizza. Don't use a rolling pin — you'd crush the gas out.

6 SAUCE AND LOAD THE PEEL

Spread the drained San Marzano tomato leaving a 2 cm clean border, a drizzle of EVOO, oregano, and the well-drained fior di latte mozzarella (if it weeps water, the base stays raw). Transfer the dough to the perforated peel dusted with semolina and shake it to shed the excess flour, which would scorch on the steel.

7 BAKE 6-8 MINUTES, TURNING

Slide the pizza onto the steel with one sharp jerk and close the lid. Bake 6-8 minutes at 350°C. At 3-4 minutes turn the pizza 180° with the peel to even out the cooking (the draught side browns first). It's ready when the edge is golden-toasted and the base feels firm and crisp when you lift it.

8 BASIL AND SERVE

Move the pizza onto a board, add the fresh basil, a last drizzle of Valencian EVOO, and flaky salt. Let it rest 1 minute so the base settles, then cut into rectangular pieces with a wheel cutter or scissors. Repeat with the second dough ball while you eat this one.

## Editor's tips

- Carbon steel is the difference between a crisp base and a pale one. It conducts heat far faster than ceramic or a thin stone, so the base seals in the first 90 seconds. If all you have is a cordierite stone, preheat it 10 minutes longer and check it's above 330°C with the infrared before loading.
- Drain the mozzarella properly: an hour on paper and, if needed, a squeeze with your hands. Fresh fior di latte releases a lot of water, and that water boils on the steel, steams the base, and leaves the centre gummy and raw underneath. It's the number-one mistake in homemade pizza.
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Mind the draught. In a kamado at 350°C with the deflector, heat rises up one side, so the pizza browns unevenly. Turn it 180° halfway through and leave the bottom damper half open: too much air spikes the air temperature but not necessarily the steel's, and it's the steel that cooks the base.

## Gear for this recipe

### Monolith Classic Pro 2.0
mikamado.es/en/kamados/monolith-classic-pro-2-cart

### Kamado Joe Big Block XL lump charcoal 9.1 kg
mikamado.es/en/accesorios/kamado-joe-big-block-xl-lump

### VEVOR Carbon Steel Pizza Steel 16 × 14.5 in (3/8 in)
*9.5 mm steel that stores heat for the tall, airy crust of the Roman pizza.*

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/vevor-pizza-steel-carbono

### Ooni 14" Perforated Aluminium Pizza Peel
*Long, perforated 14" peel to slide in the long pizza without it sticking.*

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/ooni-pala-perforada-14

### Ooni Digital Infrared Pizza Oven Thermometer
*Read the real temperature of the steel before baking at 350 °C.*

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/ooni-termometro-infrarrojo

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/pizza-a-la-pala-masa-madre-kamado

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