

Pizza Bianca

Bianche pizza, also referred to as *bianca* pizza, is basically a tomato-free pizza. This Pizza Bianca recipe is the perfect blend of savory, sweet, a little bit of tang and a smidge of saltiness from the parmesan cheese making it an all-around taste sensation that's a huge hit with my family and friends.

Ingredients: (for 2 pizzas)

For pizza dough:

3 – 3 ¼ c. all purpose flour

½ Tbsp active dry yeast

½ Tbsp sugar

1 tsp kosher salt

1/8 c. butter, softened

1 ¼ c. warm water

For bianche sauce:

8 oz. container of soft light cream cheese

Zest of ½ a lemon

Freshly squeezed lemon juice, (about 1 Tbsp or juice of 1 lemon)

2 sprigs rosemary, (discard stems, leaves finely chopped)

2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2 Tbsp freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Toppings:

2 Bosch pears, peeled and cored, sliced into strips

2 Tbsp butter

2 tsp brown sugar

½ c. fresh spinach, roughly chopped

½ medium red onion, finely sliced

200g (or 8 oz) sliced bocconcini mozzarella

Freshly grated parmesan cheese

To make dough:

(If you prefer, you can use store-bought pizza dough and skip this part). Add ½ Tbsp active dry yeast and ½ Tbsp sugar to ¼ cup warm water. Stir to incorporate and then let rest for 5 minutes for yeast to activate. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine half the amount of flour with the kosher salt. Add activated yeast mixture to flour in large bowl and stir to combine. Add in remaining flour and using your hands, combine until dough is somewhat shaggy in appearance. Turn out onto floured work surface and let sit for 5 minutes before continuing.

After 5 minutes of rest, knead dough with the heel of your hand until a ball is formed. Let rest another 5 minutes. Press dough out into a somewhat flattened rectangle and spread half of the softened butter over top. Fold dough over onto itself and knead until butter is noticeably. Once again flatten dough out into a somewhat rectangular shape and spread remaining butter over top. Fold dough over onto itself again, incorporating all of the butter, and form dough into a ball. Place ball of dough into a slightly greased bowl and flip ball once. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and a towel and place in a warm dry place and let rise for 45 minutes or so. Separate dough into two balls and spread onto pizza stone, pan or board, top with desired toppings.

Bianche Sauce:

Place finely chopped rosemary leaves in a small bowl and drizzle with 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil. Let rosemary leaves rest in olive oil to soften.

In another bowl, combine light cream cheese, lemon zest, lemon juice and parmesan cheese. Using a fork, mash and stir to combine. Add half of the rosemary leaves and olive oil to mixture and stir to combine. Set aside.

Toppings:

While dough is rising, heat a non-stick skillet over medium high heat. Add butter, sliced pears and brown sugar. Once butter and sugar start to bubble, reduce heat to medium-low and let pears gradually caramelize, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

To build pizza:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit.

Spread ½ cream cheese mixture onto each formed pizza dough. (You can also just drop it by spoonfuls for a more rustic pizza). Top each pizza with slices of caramelized pears, thinly sliced red onion and roughly chopped spinach leaves. Top with slices of bocconcini every few inches. Drizzle with remaining rosemary/olive oil. Season with freshly ground black pepper to taste and top with freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

Bake pizzas in preheated 425 degree Fahrenheit oven for 15-18 minutes, or until crust is golden brown. Remove from oven and let cool for 5 minutes before slicing – enjoy!

Kim's Cookology