

IT'S NOT DINNER, IT'S A PARTY. That's what you should keep in mind at this casual get-together, where guests get to work—and love it. Hosting is mostly about organization. The day before, start the dough, from Jim Lahey's new book, *My Pizza*. (If you're pressed for time, you can buy some dough at a local pizzeria.) The night of, set out bowls of toppings (see facing page) so guests can design their own pies. At any given moment, some people will be huddled around the oven, others will be topping the next batch, and some will be digging into perfectly charred pies. Childhood pizza parties were never this fun.

No-Knead Pizza Dough

ACTIVE 90 MINUTES TOTAL 20½ HOURS

MAKES SIX 10"-12" PIZZAS This dough is chewy, bubbly, and better than what you'll get at most pizza places. It bakes wonderfully in a home oven, on a pizza stone or a baking sheet. And thanks to the brilliant no-knead method of Jim Lahey—owner of New York's Sullivan Street Bakery and pizza spot Co.—it's easy to prepare, deriving its character from overnight fermentation, not laborious kneading. (See how he shapes it in Prep School, page 111.) Just remember to start at least 1 day ahead.

**7½ cups all-purpose flour
(1000 grams) plus more for
shaping dough**
4 tsp. fine sea salt
½ tsp. active dry yeast

Whisk flour, salt, and yeast in a medium bowl. While stirring with a wooden spoon, gradually add 3 cups water; stir until well incorporated. Mix dough gently with your hands to bring it together and form into a rough ball. Transfer to a large clean bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let dough rise at room temperature (about 72°) in a draft-

free area until surface is covered with tiny bubbles and dough has more than doubled in size, about 18 hours (time will vary depending on the temperature in the room).

Transfer dough to a floured work surface. Gently shape into a rough rectangle. Divide into 6 equal portions. Working with 1 portion at a time, gather 4 corners to center to create 4 folds. Turn seam side down and mold gently into a ball. Dust dough with flour; set aside on work surface or a floured baking sheet. Repeat with remaining portions.

Let dough rest, covered with plastic wrap or a damp kitchen towel, until soft and pliable, about 1 hour. **DO AHEAD:** Can be made 3 days ahead. Wrap each dough ball separately in plastic wrap and chill. Unwrap and let rest at room temperature on a lightly floured work surface, covered with plastic wrap, for 2–3 hours before shaping.

TO MAKE THE PIZZAS During the last hour of dough's resting, prepare oven: If using a pizza stone, arrange a rack in upper third of oven and place stone on rack; preheat oven to its hottest setting, 500°–550°, for 1 hour. If using a baking sheet, arrange a rack in middle of oven and preheat to its hottest setting, 500°–550°. (You do not need to preheat the baking sheet.)

Working with 1 dough ball at a time, dust dough generously with flour and place on a floured work surface. Gently shape dough into a 10"-12" disk (see Prep School on page 111 for illustrated instructions).

IF USING A PIZZA STONE When ready to bake, increase oven heat to broil. Sprinkle a pizza peel or rimless (or inverted rimmed) baking sheet lightly with flour. Place dough disk on prepared peel and top with desired toppings (see facing page).

Using small, quick back-and-forth movements, slide pizza from peel onto hot pizza stone. Broil pizza, rotating halfway, until bottom of crust is crisp and top is blistered, 5–7 minutes.

Using peel, transfer to a work surface to slice. Repeat, allowing pizza stone to reheat under broiler for 5 minutes between pizzas.

IF USING A BAKING SHEET Arrange dough disk on baking sheet; top with desired toppings. Bake pizza until bottom of crust is crisp and top is blistered, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a work surface to slice. Repeat with remaining pizzas.

MASTER
THE DOUGH

DON'T OVERTWIST IT.
YOU'LL BE REWARDED
WITH A CRISPY CRUST
AND INNER CHEW.