

# Pizza "Perfected"

## A Family Meal That's Tough To Top

(NAPSA)—Anyway you slice it, pizza is a great way to get the entire family involved with making dinner.

Pizza has come a long way from its humble origins as a peasant's meal. Experts claim the first modern pizza was made in 1889 to honor Italian King Umberto I and Queen Margherita.

It's said that pizza resembled the Italian flag with its colors of green (basil), white (mozzarella), and red (tomatoes).

Today, homemade pizza made from scratch can be a meal fit for a king and queen, even if you aren't expecting royalty for dinner.

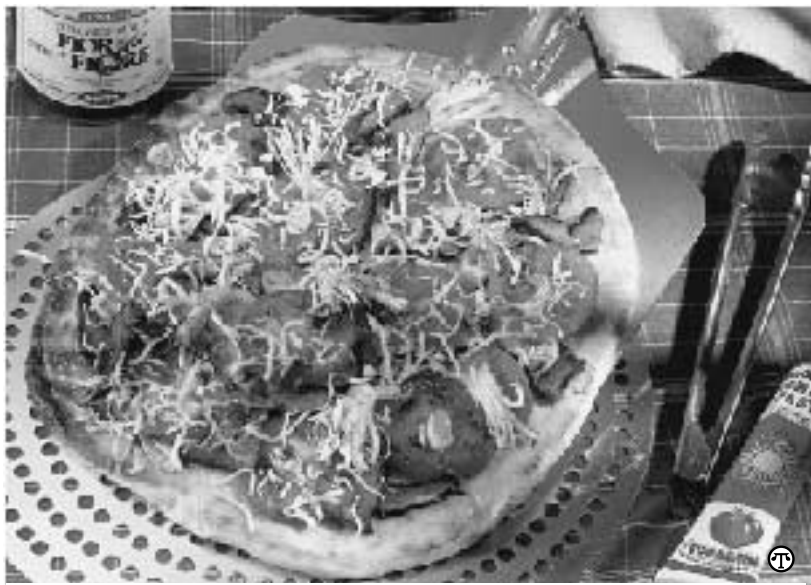
Thought to be an excellent source of protein and vitamins, homemade pizza is inexpensive and offers a chance for everyone to have their say when it comes to the toppings.

It also presents the opportunity for everyone to do their "own thing" together. According to Susan Miller, coordinator and instructor at the Baking Education Center at King Arthur Flour, "Each person can prepare his or her own favorite topping—such as pesto with tomato and olives—and then roll out the dough for an individual pizza."

"If you don't want to heat up the kitchen, get outside and use your grill," said Miller. "Assemble the pizza on a piece of parchment and transfer it to the grill. Pizza cooked outside develops a delicious charbroiled flavor. A fun and friendly meal for weekend company."

Great pizza starts with a great crust and that starts with a biga. Also called the sponge, the word biga comes from a Roman word for the team of horses that pulled a chariot.

Many believe the best pizza dough is made with flour that is high in gluten, such as King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour or King Arthur Special For Bread. The gluten in these flours helps to make the dough stretch.



A great homemade pizza crust starts with a starter—also called a biga—made from flour, yeast and water.

Here's an easy-to-follow recipe for both the biga and dough from the experts at King Arthur flour.

For more information, other great recipes or to order the flour call 1-800-827-6836 or visit [www.kingarthurfour.com](http://www.kingarthurfour.com).

### Everyone's Favorite Pizza

#### Starter

- ½ cup King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- ¼ cup lukewarm water
- pinch of instant yeast

#### Dough

- 2 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 1 heaping tablespoon Pizza Dough Flavor (optional, but delicious)
- ¾ cup water
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon instant yeast

**Starter:** Mix the biga ingredients in a small bowl, cover, and let rest at room temperature overnight.

**Dough:** In a large bowl, combine the starter and the remainder of the dough ingredients, stirring until the dough starts to leave the sides of the bowl. Transfer the dough to a lightly greased surface, oil your hands, and knead it for 5 to 7 minutes, or until it's supple, but the surface is still somewhat rough. Transfer the dough to a lightly greased bowl or dough-rising bucket, cover the bowl or bucket, and allow the dough to rise for 2 hours, turning it over and gently deflating it after 1 hour.

To make the pizza, pre-heat oven to 500°F. Roll the dough very thin, and place it on a piece of parchment paper cut to size. Top it lightly with your favorite toppings. Don't go overboard with the sauce or toppings—less is more! Using a peel, transfer the pizza (and parchment) to baking sheet, and bake until crisp, 10 to 15 minutes.

**Yield:** 1 thin 14-inch pizza.