

*Gluten Free Pizza:*  
*Thin Crust to Deep Dish*

from Gluten Free Cooking School  
written by Mary Frances Pickett

**W**elcome to Gluten Free Pizza: Thin Crust to Deep Dish! Get ready to have a lot of regrets and unsatisfied longings taken out of your life, because you're about to learn to make gluten free pizza that is crave-worthy!

## Goal:

Your goal in this class is to bake a homemade pizza that either (1) makes your knees weak, (2) gets rave reviews from your entire family, and/or (3) makes you swear that you will bake at least one pizza every week until the end of time.

Bake two of the four include pizza recipes to complete the class.

## What To Expect

The recipes in this class cover a wide range of difficulty; from easy pat-in-the-pan dough for the apprehensive beginner to the Chicago Deep Dish for the cook who is ready to wrangle super-soft doughs by hand. Expect to come back to this class in a few months and tackle the more difficult recipes, if they are more than you want to tackle the first time through.

The skills that you'll work on in this class are:

**Skill 1: Patting Dough Into A Shape:** This skill, which is also used in making some pie crusts, will allow you to make a good pizza crust without dealing with a rolling pin. This skill is mainly utilized in the Pat-In-The Pan Crust, which is the beginning level recipe for this class. If you're already comfortable using a rolling pin and picking dough up, then you're welcome to skip over this skill and the related recipe.

**Skill 2: Rolling Dough Into A Circle:** We first practiced this skill in the tortilla class, so now we're going to revisit it using a softer dough.

**Skill 3: Dough Handling Skills:** Dough handling skills are required in 3 of the 4 recipes. In this Thin Crust and Traditional pizza you'll be rotating the dough while you roll it, flipping it over to make sure that it doesn't stick while you roll it out, and transferring it to a baking dish or pizza stone. We'll also start working with super-soft doughs and learning some tricks for handling those on the Chicago Deep Dish recipe and video.

## Session 1: Reading and Watching (30 – 60 min.)

Everyone should start off by reading these two articles:

[Ingredients, Substitutions and Equipment Recommendations for Pizza](#)

[6 More Tips for Great Pizza](#)

Then decide if you want to start off at the Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced Level. Read the recipe and watch the video (if applicable) for the recipe that you'd like to make first.

### **Beginner Level Recipe:**

Recipe: [Pat-in-the-Pan Pizza Crust](#) is a malleable dough that you can pat into a cake pan. This means that you don't have to deal with the rolling pin, or moving a rolled out crust from the countertop to the hot pizza stone. The fact that it's easy, doesn't affect the taste though. This is a great pizza crust!

### **Intermediate Level Video and Recipes:**

Video: [How to Make a Rolled Out Gluten Free Pizza Crust](#)

Recipe: [Traditional Gluten Free Pizza Crust](#) The traditional pizza crust is my go-to for Saturday nights. Roll the pizza crust out to different thicknesses and adjust the consistency of the dough to get it just the way your family likes it.

Recipe: [St. Louis Style Thin Crust Pizza](#) This is the yeast-free recipe in the class. A very tasty super-thin crust pizza.

### **Advanced Level Video and Recipe:**

Video: [How to Make a Chicago Deep Dish Pizza Crust](#)

Recipe: [Chicago Style Deep Dish Pizza](#) This is the advanced level pizza because the dough is super soft. Not to fear, I'll show you some tricks to make it manageable. We also go back to using a pan for this crust. If you're ready for a sumptuous, luxurious pizza crust, this is for you.

**Bonus Video:** [How to Make Gluten Free Cheese Sticks](#)

**Bonus Recipe:** [Traditional Crust Recipe – Rice Free, Corn Free](#)

## Session 2: Baking the Pizzas (1 – 4 hours, depending on the recipe)

**Time Required:** For me, any of these recipes except the Chicago Deep Dish, would be an appropriate choice for a week-day meal in terms of time to prep and bake. However, recipes always take longer the first few times that you make them, so set aside at least an hour for your first few run-throughs. I think pizza makes a great Saturday night meal.

Allocate at least 4 hours for the Chicago Deep Dish pizza and break out a bottle of wine before you want to start. Being in a relaxed, rested and unruffled state of mind will go a long way for you when dealing with this soft dough. There are two 1 hour rests in this recipe and 30 minutes of baking, so the real work is limited to about 45 minutes.

### **Before You Start:**

Print off this [GF Pizza Note Sheet](#) and the recipe that you will be making.

All of these recipes, but especially the traditional recipe, can be customized to get the thickness and crispiness that you want. Use the Note Sheet as you bake so that you'll have the data you need to tweak to your heart's content. And don't forget to take pictures as you work!

# Pizza: Ingredients, Substitutions and Equipment

Pizza is actually a pretty simple food to cook. You'd never know that though, since most of us are accustomed to paying someone else to make our pizza, or at least our pizza crust, for us.

## Ingredients & Substitutions:

The basic ingredients in a pizza crust are flour, salt, sugar, water and yeast. I use my GF flour mix for these pizza recipes. I've started adding the weight of the flour to the recipes, for those of you who choose to weigh your flours.

**Corn & Rice:** If you're unable to use corn or rice, I've added a bonus recipe to the class that uses Bob's Red Mill All-Purpose GF Flour Mix. Enjoy!

**Sugar:** For those of you who avoid sugar, but do use other natural sweeteners, you can substitute an appropriate amount of another sweetener. If you can not use any sweeteners at all, then just add the yeast directly to the flour without proofing it. The yeast will activate and began to do its work without the sugar; it will just not do it as fast.

**Yeast:** Yeast is not actually a required ingredient in pizza. The St. Louis Style thin crust pizza uses baking powder as the leavening agent. If you cannot use yeast, then try that recipes. It's very good.

**Dairy:** All of the crust recipes are naturally dairy free, or can be made dairy free. If you also need to have a cheese-free pizza, then I suggest that you browse a few vegan blogs for pizza recipes. There are a number of non-dairy cheese alternatives and I think that you'll find that many vegan cooks have perfected the non-cheese pizza.

## Equipment:

**Pizza Stone & Cast Iron:** The #1 secret to making great pizza crusts at home is heat. You need a hot oven and a hot surface to lay the crust on. Pizza stones and cast iron are relatively inexpensive tools that will help you accomplish this in a home kitchen.

Pizza stones and/or cast iron skilletes soak up the heat from your oven and apply it directly to the bottom of your pizza crust. This is what gives you a nice, crispy crust. If you don't have a pizza stone, there are many choices as to shape and thickness. Thicker is usually better, but the thinner stones that cost less than \$20 will get the job done too.

Some pizzas, like the pat-in-the-pan crust or the Chicago Deep Dish do better in a cast-iron skillet than on a pizza stone. Every kitchen should have a cast-iron skillet, so if you don't, go ahead and get one.

**Pizza Peel:** A pizza peel is a nice tool for moving the pizza dough to the stone and taking it out after it's baked. You don't have to have it, but it does mean that you can get the pizza in and out of the oven more quickly which allows more of the hot air to stay in the oven. If you don't have one (and I don't) then watch the Regular Crust video to see how I move my dough from the counter to the hot baking stone.

**Rolling Pin:** If you're making one of the rolled out pizza crusts, then you'll also need a rolling pin. As you'll see in one of the videos, my rolling pin is getting quite old and we nearly broke it while we were making this video. When, I replace it I'm going to get a good heavy wooden rolling pin that will hopefully be indestructible.

**A Hot Oven:** The last piece of equipment that you need is a hot oven. And I mean hot! Commercial pizza ovens bake pizza at upwards of 900 degrees F, so crank your oven as high as it will go. Even if the recipes doesn't call for heat that high, feel free to experiment with a number of different temperatures.

If it's too hot for those kind of oven temperatures inside, then fire up the grill outside! Several of my students this past year rigged up some ingenious grills using what they had...like an old metal wheelbarrow with a grate over the top!

## 6 More Tips For Making Gluten Free Pizza Crusts

Since I originally wrote the content for this class, I've learned a few new tips that are not included in the videos. So, here are 5 more tips for making great gluten free pizzas.

### **1. How To Form A Thick Crust For the Edge Of Your Pizza.**

I made perfectly flat pizza crusts for years, and then figured out that making a thick crust – like you get on delivery or pizza parlor pizzas – is so simple. Roll your crust out to the desired thickness and then use your thumb and forefinger to pinch up a raised edge all the way around the crust. It doesn't have to be large; it will expand when you bake the crust.

### **2. Feel Free To Add More Flour If The Dough Is Too Soft To Work With**

Since pizza dough does not have to rise very much – at least for thin to medium-crust pizzas – you can adjust the flour/water ratio in the recipe to suit your taste. If the dough is too soft for you to easily work with, then add some more flour. It's okay to use a slightly thicker dough while you're building up your dough-handling skills.

### **3. Cast Iron Skillets Are Awesome!**

In the videos I used cake pans to make the Deep Dish and Pat In The Pan Pizzas. My students that this past year, tried cast-iron skillets instead and got fabulous results. So, anywhere that you see me using a cake pan, just substitute a cast-iron skillet. You'll get the best results if you pre-heat your skillets, so exercise some care when spreading the dough. You can use your judgment as to how long you want to let your skillet pre-heat before you add the dough. Just don't start off with a cold skillet.

### **4. There Are No Hard and Fast Rules**

We like thin crust pizzas that have a nice, crisp bottom. You may prefer a thicker, more chewy crust. Pizza crust recipes are relatively simple and you can tweak them to your heart's content. If you want a thicker crust, just roll out a thicker crust. If you want the crust to be softer and rise more, add a bit more water to the dough. If that makes the dough too soft to pick up, then try patting the dough out on a well-floured cookie sheet and sliding it onto the hot pizza stone.

## **5. Freeze the Crusts**

If a recipe makes too much pizza crust for your family, you have a few options. If you'd like pizza again the next day, just cover your dough and refrigerate it for 24 hours. If you'd like pizza sometime within the next few weeks, then you can roll out your crust, and place it in the freezer on a pan. Once the dough has frozen, wrap it well so that it won't get freezer burn and then return it to the freezer. When you're ready to use it, just let the crust thaw at room temperature and then top and bake as usual.

## **6. Longer Rise = More Flavor**

One experiment that you might like to try is giving the dough a longer rise. Most of the time, I make my dough, roll-out the crusts and bake the pizzas right away. However, if you have a more relaxed day, then you could make the pizza dough a few hours early and leave it to rise on the counter. That gives the dough time to rise and lets the yeasty flavors develop.



# Pat in the Pan Pizza

(Yield: 4 servings, assuming a side-dish of some sort)

## Pizza Crust:

1 Tbsp. Rapid Rise yeast  
 1 1/3 c. water, warm  
 1 tsp. sugar  
 1 1/3 c. brown rice flour  
 1 c. corn starch  
 2 tsp. xanthan gum  
 1 tsp salt

1/2 tsp. fennel seed  
 1/2 tsp. rosemary (dried and crushed)  
 1/2 tsp. garlic powder  
 1/2 tsp. oregano  
 2 tsp. olive oil  
 2 tsp. cider vinegar

## Pizza Sauce

1 14.5 oz can petite diced tomatoes  
 1/2 of a 6 oz. can of tomato paste  
 1/2 tsp. oregano  
 1/2 tsp. garlic powder

1/2 tsp. fennel seed  
 1/2 tsp. rosemary  
 6 fresh basil leaves, minced  
 sugar to taste (optional)

**Sauce Directions:** Combine the tomatoes, tomato paste and spices in a saucepan and heat over medium low. The sauce should simmer while you make the crust and prepare the toppings. Add the basil when you put the pizza crusts into the oven the first time. Add sugar, to taste, if the sauce is more tart than you like.

**Crust Directions:** Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Combine the water, sugar and yeast in a small mixing bowl and set it aside to proof.

Combine the brown rice flour, corn starch, xanthan gum and spices in a larger mixing bowl.

Add the oil and vinegar to the yeast mixture and then pour all of that into the flour mixture. Mix the dough until it is smooth. The dough will be somewhat sticky, so sprinkle some extra rice flour on it. Form the dough into a

ball and let it rest for 5 minutes.

Grease and flour 2 nine-inch cake pans (square or round). Split the dough into two pieces and place one into each pan. Starting from the middle of the dough, press the dough and out towards the edges of the pan. When you get the dough to the edges, continue to push the dough up onto the side of the pan, so that you will have a nice crust.

Bake the crusts for 8 minutes and then remove them from the oven. Drizzle a small amount of olive oil onto your crusts and spread it evenly with the back of a spoon. Add the toppings, starting with the pizza sauce and ending with the cheese.

Bake the pizza for an additional 10 – 15 minutes, until the cheese has browned to your liking.

# Gluten Free Traditional Pizza Crust

## Gluten Free Pizza Crust (2 medium pizzas)

1 Tbsp. Rapid Rise yeast	2 tsp. xanthan gum
1 1/3 c. water	1 tsp salt
1 tsp. sugar	2 tsp. olive oil
2 1/3 c. Mary's Gluten Free Flour Mix	2 tsp. cider vinegar

## Gluten Free Pizza Crust (2 large pizzas)

2 Tbsp. Rapid Rise yeast	4 tsp. xanthan gum
2 2/3 c. water	2 tsp salt
2 tsp. sugar	4 tsp. olive oil
4 2/3 c. Mary's Gluten Free Flour Mix	4 tsp. cider vinegar

*Note: If you're weighing your flour, then use 340 grams for the medium pizzas and 680 grams for the large pizzas.*

## Mary's Gluten Free Flour Mix

*This will make enough flour for the large pizza recipe, or two batch of the medium pizza.*

250 g brown rice flour	131 g sorghum flour or garfava flour
233 g corn starch or tapioca flour	66 g masa harina

## Cooking Instructions:

Put your pizza stone into the oven and preheat the oven to 500 degrees. Combine water with the sugar and yeast in a small mixing bowl and set aside to proof.

Combine the flour mix, salt and xanthan gum. Add the oil and vinegar to the yeast mixture, which should have some air bubbles by now. Then add all of liquid ingredients into the flour mixture and mix well.

Place the dough onto a heavily floured rolling board and knead the dough a few times, working in additional flour as needed until the

dough is pliable and not sticky.

Separate the dough into halves and roll one half out into a circle that is approximately 1/8" thick. Curl your hand into a fist and then use your thumb and the side of your first finger to pinch up a raised crust. Move the crust to the hot pizza stone and bake at 500 degrees until the top of the crust gets just a hint of color.

Remove the crust from the oven. Add all of your toppings, and then put back in the oven to bake until your toppings look well done (e.g. cheese starts to brown). Repeat 6 for the 2nd half of dough.

If you're making the  
Traditional or St. Louis Thin  
Crust Pizza,

*Go to:*

[www.glutenfreecookingschool.com/  
cooking-class-videos/](http://www.glutenfreecookingschool.com/cooking-class-videos/)

click on Gluten Free Pizza: Deep Dish to  
Thin Crust, and watch the 1<sup>st</sup> video.

The Password is: *deepdishgf*

## GF St. Louis Style Thin Crust

St. Louis Style Pizza is a crisp, but also tender, thin-crust pizza that is traditionally cut into squares. The crust is leavened with baking powder instead of yeast, so it's perfect for those of you who need to be gluten free and yeast free. St. Louisans top their pizza with Provel cheese, which is generally only available in the St. Louis area.

This recipe is a gluten free adaptation of a Cook's Illustrated recipe.

### Dough:

2 cups (10 oz) Mary's GF Flour Mix	1 tsp. baking powder
2 Tbsp. cornstarch	1 tsp. salt
2 tsp. xanthan gum	1 1/8 c. water
2 tsp. sugar	2 Tbsp. olive oil

### Sauce:

8 oz. tomato sauce	1 Tbsp. sugar
3 Tbsp. tomato paste	2 tsp. oregano

### Mary's Gluten Free Flour Mix

250 g brown rice flour	131 g sorghum flour or garfava flour
233 g corn starch or tapioca flour	66 g masa harina

### Instructions:

Whisk the sauce ingredients together in a small bowl and set aside.

Move one of the racks to the next to lowest position in your oven and place a pizza stone on the rack. Preheat your oven to 500 degrees F.

For the crust, combine the flour, cornstarch, salt, sugar and baking powder in a large bowl. Add the water and oil and stir until the dough

starts to come together. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and knead a few times until the dough is smooth and pliable.

Divide the dough into two equal pieces. Roll out one piece of dough into a 12" circle and move it to the hot pizza stone or baking sheet. Bake the crust for a few minutes until it is very slightly browned. Remove the crust from the oven. Top with sauce and cheese and then put it back into the oven to bake until the cheese has browned on top.

# Gluten Free Chicago Style Deep Dish Crust

You'll need some extra tools to make this pizza – aluminum foil, cooking spray, and either a spatula, basting brush, or large spoon. This dough is really soft, and very hard to manipulate. All of the tools above will make it easier (as you'll see in the accompanying video which I HIGHLY recommend that you watch) ,but this is not a recipe for beginners.

This recipes is a gluten free adaptation of the Chicago Deep Dish pizza in the January 2010 issue of Cook's Illustrated.

## Dough

14.75 oz. (3.25 cups) Mary's GF Flour Mix	1 1/2 tsp. salt
2.75 oz. (1/2 cup) gluten free cornmeal	2 1/4 c. (18 oz.) water
2 teaspoons xanthan gum	2 Tbsp. oil
2 1/4 tsp. rapid-rise yeast	3 Tbsp. butter, melted
2 tsp. sugar	4 Tbsp. butter, softened

## Sauce

2 - 8 oz. Petite diced tomatoes, drained	2 tsp. oregano
3 Tbsp. tomato paste	1 tsp. salt
1 Tbsp. sugar	

## Toppings

1 lb. mozzarella, shredded	1/4 c. grated Parmesan cheese
----------------------------	-------------------------------

## Mary's Gluten Free Flour Mix

250 g brown rice flour	131 g sorghum flour or garfava flour
233 g corn starch or tapioca flour	66 g masa harina

**Sauce Instructions:** Combine all of the sauce ingredients into a medium-size pot over medium heat. Once the sauce is bubbling use a stick blender to puree part of the tomatoes. (Alternatively, remove half of the sauce to a blender or food processor, give it a whiz, and then return this sauce to the pot).

## Dough Instructions:

Mix flour, cornmeal, salt, sugar, and yeast in bowl in a large mixing bowl. Add water, melted butter, and 2 Tbsp oil and mix with a hand mixer or stand mixer for 3 – 4 minutes. The dough will be very soft – much like gluten free bread dough. Be sure to watch the video to see the actual consistency in case you need to adjust the amount of water.

Transfer the dough to an oiled bowl; cover with Saran wrap; and let rise on the countertop for approximately 1 hour.

Now, cover your rolling area with aluminum foil and spray the foil with cooking spray (make sure it's GF). Turn the dough out onto this surface and then roll it into 15- by 12-inch rectangle using a rolling pin (or your hands if necessary). Spread the softened butter over the surface of the dough, leaving a 1/2-inch border along the edges.

Now, roll the dough into a tight cylinder. With the seam side down, flatten the cylinder into a 18- by 4-inch rectangle and then cut the rectangle in half crosswise. Take half the dough and fold it into thirds and then pinch the seams together to form a ball. Repeat with the remaining half.

Return the dough balls to the oiled bowl and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Put the dough in the refrigerator to rise for another hour.

Coat two 9-inch round cake pans with 2 tablespoons olive oil each. Slide a dough ball out of the oiled bowl and into one of the pans. Lightly press dough into pan, working into corners and 1 inch up sides. Repeat with the remaining dough ball.

For each pizza, sprinkle 2 cups mozzarella evenly over surface of dough. Spread 1 1/4 cups tomato sauce over cheese and sprinkle 2 tablespoons Parmesan over sauce. Bake until crust is golden brown, 20 to 30 minutes. Remove pizza from the oven and let the pizza rest for 10 minutes before slicing and serving.

If you're making the Chicago  
Deep Dish Pizza,

*Go to:*

[www.glutenfreecookingschool.com/  
cooking-class-videos/](http://www.glutenfreecookingschool.com/cooking-class-videos/)

click on Gluten Free Pizza: Deep Dish to  
Thin Crust, and watch the 2<sup>nd</sup> video.

The Password is: *deepdishgf*

## Gluten Free Pizza Baking Notes and Troubleshooting Checklist

### Ingredient Checklist:

Grab a pen and check off each ingredient off as you add it. Note the actual weight/amount used, so that you can compare it back to the recipe later, if needed.

<input type="checkbox"/> flour _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> yeast or baking powder _____ <input type="checkbox"/> sugar _____ <input type="checkbox"/> salt _____ <input type="checkbox"/> xanthan gum _____	<input type="checkbox"/> water _____ <input type="checkbox"/> oil _____ <input type="checkbox"/> cider vinegar _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____
--	--

### Baking Notes:

Taking good notes while you bake will increase the pace of your learning and help you tweak the recipes so that they are perfect for you.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Recipe: \_\_\_\_\_

Brand of ingredients used: \_\_\_\_\_

Substitutions (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Description of dough consistency: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of crust after baking: \_\_\_\_\_

Oven Temp: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of Oven Rack: \_\_\_\_\_

Baking Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Was Pizza Stone Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Changes to make next time: \_\_\_\_\_



# Bonus Recipe: Traditional Pizza Crust

(Corn Free, Rice Free Version)

22 oz. Bob's Red Mill All-Purpose GF Flour Mix	16 oz. water
15 g. xanthan gum	15 g. Rapid Rise yeast
12 g. salt	10 g. sugar
	2 Tbsp. olive oil

## **Cooking Instructions:**

Put your pizza stone into the oven and preheat the oven to 500 degrees. Combine water with the sugar and yeast in a small mixing bowl and set aside to proof.

Combine the flour mix, salt and xanthan gum. Add the oil to the yeast mixture, which should have some air bubbles by now. Then add all of liquid ingredients into the flour mixture and mix well.

Place the dough onto a heavily floured rolling board and knead the dough a few times, working in additional flour as needed until the dough is pliable and not sticky.

Separate the dough into halves or thirds, depending on the size and thickness of crust that you desire. Roll out one portion of the crust to the desired thickness. Curl your hand into a fist and then use your thumb and the side of your first finger to pinch up a raised crust. Move the crust to the hot pizza stone and bake at 500 degrees until the top of the crust gets just a hint of color.

Remove the crust from the oven. Add all of your toppings, and then put back in the oven to bake until your toppings look well done (e.g. cheese starts to brown). Repeat for the remaining portions of dough.

## Bonus Video: Learn to Make Cheese Sticks!

*Go to:*

[www.glutenfreecookingschool.com/cooking-class-videos/](http://www.glutenfreecookingschool.com/cooking-class-videos/)

click on Gluten Free Pizza: Deep Dish to Thin Crust,  
and watch the 3<sup>rd</sup> video.

The Password is: *deepdishgf*