

PIZZA DOUGH

Makes enough dough for about 6 pizzas.

SPONGE

2 teaspoons dry yeast
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup lukewarm water
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup bread flour

DRY INGREDIENTS

4 cups unbleached white flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rye flour
1 teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup olive oil

TO make the sponge, dissolve the yeast in $\frac{3}{4}$ cup lukewarm water and stir in the $\frac{2}{3}$ cup flour. Allow this mixture to sit until quite bubbly, about 30 minutes.

Mix together the bread flour, rye flour, and salt in another bowl. Stir 1 cup of cold water and 1 cup of these dry ingredients into the sponge. Mix thoroughly and let sit for another 30 minutes.

Add the remaining dry ingredients and the olive oil and knead, by hand or in an electric mixer fitted with the dough hook. Knead until the dough is soft and elastic, about 5 minutes. It may be necessary to add more flour if the dough is too wet, but add only enough flour to form a soft, slightly sticky dough. A very soft, moist dough makes the best crust.

Put the dough in a large bowl, cover, and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, about 2 hours. For an even better-tasting, more supple dough, let the dough rise slowly overnight in the refrigerator.

Punch down the dough and divide into portions—4-ounce balls for pizzettas, 3-ounce balls for crostatas, or 7-ounce balls for standard pizzas. Form each portion into a nice smooth sphere. Allow the dough balls to rest at room temperature, wrapped in plastic, for an hour or so before shaping and baking. Individual dough balls may also be frozen, then thawed overnight.