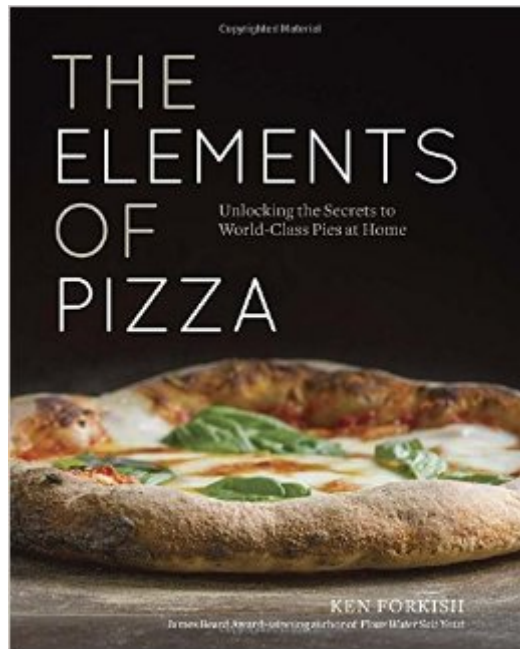


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The Elements Of Pizza: Unlocking The Secrets To World-Class Pies At Home



Synopsis

good pizza is magic. Something indescribably wonderful happens when you combine crust, tomato, and cheese and bake them to melted perfection. In this highly anticipated cookbook, Ken Forkishâowner of the beloved restaurant Kenâs Artisan Pizza in Portland, Oregon; the James Beard and IACP Awardâwinning author of *Flour Water Salt Yeast*; and one of the most trusted baking authorities in the countryâproves that amazing pizza is within reach of any home cook.Â
The Elements of Pizza breaks down each step of the pizza-making process, from choosing a dough to shaping your pie to selecting cheeses and toppings that will work for your home kitchen setup. Forkish offers more than a dozen different dough recipesâsame-day âSaturday doughsâthat you can make in the morning to bake pizza that night, levain doughs made from a naturally fermented yeast starter, and even gluten-free doughâeach of which results in the best, most texturally sublime crust youâve ever made at home. His clear, expert instructions will have you shaping pies and loading a pizza peel with the confidence of a professional pizzaiolo. And his innovative, seasonal topping ideas will surprise and delight any pizza loverâand inspire you to create your own signature pies, just the way you like them.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Elements of Pizza is formatted fairly similarly to the author's previous masterpiece: *Flour Water Salt Yeast*. There is a very lengthy introduction covering the soul of pizza (at least as it relates to the Naples, Rome, and New York regions as well as American pan/bar pizza and flat breads). If you're hoping for a book that covers Sicilian pizza or Chicago-style pizza or St. Louis-style pizza, then this

is not the book for you (or at least, you'll need another one). Ken focuses on a few pizza styles and dives into what makes them so great and how to recreate them in your home kitchen. Ken's advice spans 40 pages of text and accompanying photos, wherein he explains the key ingredients for making great pizza, the necessary equipment, and the right methods for working with pizza dough. His explanation of the two techniques for loading pizza onto the stone from the peel is both humorous and brilliant - here's hoping it helps me not botch the first pizza of the night like I normally do. As far as the actual recipes go, there's a fair amount of diversity in both dough recipes and topping suggestions. A couple of the recipes are almost identical to their sibling recipe from Flour Water Salt Yeast (at least the Saturday and Overnight doughs), but with at least one difference. Ken writes that he does not follow the autolyse process he promoted in FWSY given the traditions of pizza-making. He's modified his sauce recipes slightly too and none of the various topping recipes except the Margherita overlap. Also - there is one gluten-free dough recipe, with a great discussion on how the flour brand/mix can affect the final dough. Ken's instructions on how to assemble and bake a variety of pizzas and flatbreads are clear and encouraging.

I make a lot of pizza at home and have been scooping up every new pizza book available. Every pizza book offers something different whether it's a philosophy on dough, creative toppings or just a good old history lesson. This book, *The Elements of Pizza* by Ken Forkish does a bit of each and is very successful. Ken Forkish is the owner of Ken's Artisan Bakery, Ken's Artisan Pizza and Trifecta Tavern, all located in Portland, OR. For this book, he tried to leave his knowledge behind and traveled to Italy to meet with true pizza masters. In the end I feel like he developed his own philosophy on pizza which mixes his knowledge of baking with their knowledge of pizza. The heart of this book is the dough, as it should be in a pizza book, and it offers 12 different recipes for dough. What I really enjoy is that many of the dough recipes are for similar New York or Neapolitan style but they vary in the amount of time needed to make them. There are doughs that range from a few hours *I Slept In But I want Pizza Tonight* to a few days *Overnight Levain Pizza*. There are also recipes for pan pizza, bar pizza, Al Taglio and Gluten Free dough. The dough recipes are simple and use only water, salt, dried yeast and flour. Some recipes require a starter which is made with the same ingredients. Prior to the dough section of the book there are five chapters, *The Soul Of Pizza*, *Pizza Styles*, *Eight Details for Great Pizza Crusts*, *Ingredients & Equipment* and *Methods*. The *Soul of Pizza* really touches on the history and philosophy of pizza making in Italy and the Eastern United States. I really enjoyed this section of the book, the insight provided by his visits to some of the best pizza places in

Italy is priceless.

The first thing that stands out about this book is the helpful way in which the sections have been arranged. There is an absolutely gorgeous introduction chapter called appropriately The Soul of Pizza, and for the first time when reading a cookbook I found myself immersed in a wonderful story of pizza and the regions of Italy that take pizza to levels of yummy perfection. It is a carefully researched and beautifully written story and I actually read it all the way through (something I never do with cookbooks). I guess that is because The Elements of Pizza is actually much more than a cookbook. It embraces all things pizza, not least of all pizza's Italian origins and the wonderful culture it arose from. Ken Forkish does an amazing job of capturing the beauty of the Italian country (amazing amazing photography wow), and the skill and dedication of pizza artisans there who have been perfecting their skill for generations with loving dedication. His descriptions of the consistency of crusts and the various regional tastes is nothing short of miraculous. I mean I could really imagine the taste and texture of the pizza. It is a mouth-watering and very inspiring journey into the world of pizza. Instead of finding a bunch of pizza recipes attached to a couple dough recipes, as in most recipe books, I discovered in this book a whole chapter talking about nothing but dough. And by that I mean to say there are 12 different pizza dough recipes plus one gluten-free pizza dough recipe. They are divided into helpful categories based on time it takes to make the doughs, starting with 5 fairly fast doughs, followed by refrigerated doughs that take 24, 48 or 72 hours respectively, followed by a couple naturally-leavened doughs, and then some more specialty doughs.

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