

caramelized onion, balsamic & fontina pizza

BEAUTY, LOVE & GRUB

SERVES 4-6

Onions. I love them. I inherited that from my father who would eat (Vidalia) onions like apples when I was a kid. He still does. And my stepmother would pack his lunch with a sandwich that had green onions hanging out of both sides. You should probably at least like onions to make and eat this pizza, but it does not have a strong oniony flavor since the onions are caramelized, drawing out their natural sweetness. And cooking off the balsamic vinegar, along with adding balsamic glaze after baking, adds additional sweetness. Thyme...we all need more of it...so I added some. If you at least like onions, you'll love this pizza!

1 ½ tablespoons	good olive oil
1 large	sweet (Vidalia) onion, sliced
1 large	red onion, sliced
2 large	shallots (about 1 heaping cup once sliced)
1 ½ teaspoons	kosher salt
to taste	freshly ground pepper
1 ½ tablespoons	fresh thyme, minced
¼ cup	good balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon	good olive oil
¾ pound	fontina cheese, grated
1 ball	pizza dough, recipe provided (or store bought)
	all-purpose flour for rolling out dough
	balsamic glaze for drizzling, recipe provided (or store bought)

Preheat pizza stone in oven at 500 degrees for at least 30 minutes.

Once peeled, cut onions in half through the core, and then slice about ¼-inch thick, discarding core. Slice shallots to ¼-inch thickness. Heat 1½ tablespoons olive oil in a 12-inch non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and shallots, thyme, 1½ teaspoons salt, and pepper to pan. Cook for about 12 minutes, tossing every 1-2 minutes until most onions are golden brown. Pour balsamic vinegar over onions, increase heat to high, and toss to coat for 1 minute. Vinegar will cook off under high heat. Remove from heat and set aside to cool.

While the onions cool, grate cheese into a bowl and set aside.

Prepare pizza dough. Lightly flour a wooden cutting board or smooth surface and rolling pin. Roll out pizza dough into a large circle about 12 inches in diameter to form the crust. Lightly flour wooden spatula and move crust onto it. Using your fingers, pinch a narrow rim around the perimeter of the crust. Using a pastry brush, spread 1 teaspoon olive oil over the crust, avoiding the rimmed edge. Spread onion mixture over crust. Sprinkle cheese on top of onions. Slide onto pizza stone in oven for 8 minutes. Remove from oven using wooden spatula and allow to cool on cutting board for 5-10 minutes. Drizzle with balsamic glaze.

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bobby flay's pizza dough

(slightly modified)

For pizza dough and pie crust, I never try to create my own. It's just not worth it if someone else has created something you like. I use Bobby Flay's pizza dough because it's quick and easy, but feel free to use another recipe if you have one you like.

3 ½ - 4 cups	flour (use bread flour for a crispier crust, all-purpose will yield a chewier crust)
2 teaspoons	granulated sugar
1 packet	active dry yeast (about 2 teaspoons)
2 teaspoons	kosher salt
1 ½ cups	hot tap water
2 tablespoons	olive oil
2 teaspoons	olive oil

Combine the flour, sugar, yeast, and kosher salt in the bowl of a stand mixer (preferably with a dough hook, but if not, with a paddle attachment) and combine. While the mixer is running, add the water and 2 tablespoons of olive oil and beat until the dough forms into a ball. If the dough is sticky, add additional flour, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the dough comes together in a solid ball. If the dough is too dry, add additional water, 1 tablespoon at a time. Scrape the dough onto a lightly floured surface and gently knead into a smooth, firm ball.

Grease a large bowl with the remaining 2 teaspoons olive oil, add the dough, cover the bowl with plastic wrap, and put it in a warm area to let it double in size, about 1 hour. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and divide it into 2 equal pieces. Cover each with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap and let them rest for 10 minutes.

You may freeze one ball of dough, covered in plastic wrap, if not using immediately.

balsamic glaze

2 cups	good balsamic vinegar
¾ cup	brown sugar, firmly packed

Mix balsamic vinegar with brown sugar in a saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly until sugar has dissolved. Bring to a boil, stirring for 1 minute, then reduce heat to low and simmer until glaze is reduced by half, about 25 minutes. Let cool and allow to thicken for one hour. (It takes time to thicken.) Pour into a jar with a lid and store unused portion in refrigerator.