

LAMB MERGUEZ PIZZA

Yield: 4 Dough Balls, About 8 Ounces Each

Ingredients	Amounts
<i>Pizza Dough</i>	
All-purpose flour, plus extra for dusting (optional: combine ½ bread flour, ½ Tipo 00 flour)	625 g
Extra virgin olive oil	30 ml
Sourdough leaven (optional)	45 g
Dry active yeast	5 g
Kosher salt	5 g
<i>Lamb Merguez Spice Mix</i>	
Chili powder	60 g
Salt, fine	45 g
Cayenne	10 g
Cumin, ground	10 g
Anise seeds, ground	10 g
Black pepper, ground	6 g
Sweet paprika	5 g
Garlic cloves, peeled and finely minced	3 ea.
Extra virgin olive oil	2 Tbsp.
<i>Lamb Merguez</i>	
American Lamb, ground	2 lbs.
Lamb Merguez Spice Mix (recipe above)	3 Tbsp.
<i>Pizza Sauce</i>	
Italian plum tomatoes, 28 oz. can	1 ea.
Extra virgin olive oil	1 ½ tsp.
Marjoram, dried, crumbled	1 tsp.
Oregano, dried, crumbled	1 tsp.
Salt	1 tsp. scant
Sugar	1 tsp. scant
Garlic powder	¼ tsp.
<i>Pizza Toppings</i>	
Cornmeal, medium, for dusting	as needed
Black olive tapenade	8 Tbsp.
Pizza Sauce (recipe above)	3 oz.
Lamb Merguez (recipe above)	1 ½ cups
Red onion, sliced thinly and caramelized in extra virgin olive oil	1 ea.
Mozzarella cheese, fresh, drained on cheesecloth for 24 hours in the	3 cups

refrigerator (optional but will produce a better pizza)

Pecorino cheese, grated finely, not packed, grated light and fluffy	2 cups
Extra virgin olive oil	as needed

Method

1. *For the Pizza Dough:* Put 1 ¾ cups/420 milliliters lukewarm water in a mixing bowl. Sprinkle yeast over water and let dissolve, about 2 minutes.
2. Using your hands add flour, olive oil, sourdough leaven (optional), and salt. Mix well until flour is incorporated and dough forms, about 5 minutes.
3. Lightly dust a work surface with flour. Turn dough out onto the surface and knead lightly until it looks smooth, 3 to 4 minutes. Cut dough into 4 equal pieces, about 8 ounces/225 grams each.
4. Wrap dough pieces individually in plastic wrap and refrigerate several hours or, for best results, overnight. You can skip this rise and use the dough right away but the cool, slow rise gives the pizza a better texture and flavor.
5. To use dough, remove from the refrigerator, unwrap, flour lightly, and cover with a kitchen towel about 45 minutes before baking. Each dough ball will make a 10-inch diameter pizza.
6. *For the Lamb Merguez Spice Mix:* Mix spices well and keep dry. Mix together with garlic and olive oil. Refrigerate overnight.
7. *For the Lamb Merguez:* Add a 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil mix to a sauté pan and heat over medium heat. Crumble ground lamb into the pan and cook to medium-rare.
8. *For the Pizza Sauce:* Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix into a relatively smooth sauce. You may do this in a food processor on pulse, but do not purée completely.
9. *To Assemble:* Preheat a baking stone in 500°F oven for 20 minutes.
10. Shape an 8 ounce dough ball into a pizza round, about 10 inches in diameter. Dust a pizza peel or the back of a sheet pan with cornmeal and place the shaped dough on top. Shake the peel to loosen the dough and make sure it slides easily. If stuck, add more cornmeal under the dough.
11. Spread 2 tablespoons of tapenade across the dough. Add 3 ounces of pizza sauce. Distribute 1 ½ cups crumbled lamb merguez evenly and 3 tablespoons caramelized onions. Finish with ¾ cup of mozzarella cheese and ½ cup Pecorino cheese.
12. Carefully slide the pizza onto the baking stone and bake for 4 to 8 minutes depending upon your oven. When the pizza is done, slide the peel under it to remove. Place on a cutting board and cut into wedges.

Notes: All components of the recipe are best prepared a day ahead of time.

The pizza dough tastes best prepared a day in advance and refrigerated overnight.

The lamb merguez is best prepared a day ahead and refrigerated overnight to season the lamb.

The recipe will make more than you will need for the pizza but the uncooked meat can be frozen and used at a later time.

The sauce can be prepared in advance and refrigerated. Bring to room temperature before using.