

# Pizza Margherita

**Country:** Italy

**Ports visited:** Naples, Rome, La Spezia, Capri, Amalfi, Catania, Venice

**Ships visiting:** Wonder of the Seas, Odyssey of the Seas, Brilliance of the Seas, Rhapsody of the Seas

Sample proper Italian pizza in Italy while cruising on Wonder of the Seas in the home of pizza – Naples – and in Rome and La Spezia; on Odyssey of the Seas in Rome and Capri; on Brilliance of the Seas in Venice; and on Rhapsody of the Seas in Amalfi and Catania.

## Pizza base

*(Make the dough 24 hours before you cook the pizza!)*

600g all-purpose flour  
*(or double zero flour if you have it)*

400ml cool water

15g salt *(or fine sea salt)*

0.18g of active dry yeast *(or 0.66g of fresh yeast)*

20ml *(4 tsp)*  
extra virgin olive oil

15g sugar *(3 tsp)*

## Pizza Toppings

### Sauce

1x 400g can of sweet plum tomatoes *(San Marzano tomatoes are the best but any skinless plum tomatoes work well)*

5g *(1 tsp)* of salt  
*(or sea salt if you have it)*

4 or 5 fresh basil leaves for the sauce,  
plus 3 or 4 more per pizza

15ml *(3 tsp)* of extra virgin olive oil

### Cheese

400g mozzarella *(100g per pizza)*

Makes four 11-12-inch pizzas



### Step 1

Put 400ml water in a large bowl and add the salt and sugar. Add 60g (10%) of flour in and mix with your hands or a wooden spoon until the consistency is batter-like. Add the yeast in and dissolve into the mixture.

### Step 2

Gradually keep adding the flour, mixing it in the whole time. Add 20ml of olive oil and mix into the dough.

### Step 3

Take the dough out of the bowl and place on a chopping board and knead for 15-20 minutes by hand. Or put it in a mixer on low speed for 10-15 minutes.

### Step 4

Cover the dough with a clean dish towel and leave to rest for 15-30 minutes, then fold the dough over itself four or five times and form a smooth round ball of dough. Put it in a bowl covered in cling film or airtight container and leave for 14 hours to allow it to rise.

### Step 5

Take the dough out and cut into four dough balls of about 250g each.

Mould them into smooth, round dough balls. Put them into four individual bowls covered in cling film or airtight containers with enough space for them to rise more.

Leave for another 10 hours.

### Step 6

Once the dough is ready, take it out of the containers and put onto a clean chopping board and knead it into a pizza shape. Stretch it out to about 9-10 inches.

### Step 7

Preheat your oven on grill mode to as hot as it goes (which is usually three hundred degrees Celsius). This should take about 5-10 minutes.

### Step 8

Put the tomatoes and salt in a mixing bowl. Squash the tomatoes with a fork, large spoon or by hand until they are a saucy consistency with only tiny pieces of tomato in it. Tear up the basil leaves and add them in.

Then add in 15ml of olive oil. Thinly slice the mozzarella and place on a plate. Add extra basil if desired too.

### Step 9

Place your pizza on a high shelf in the oven on a large baking tray, about three inches below the grill. Cook it for three minutes, then flip over and cook for another three minutes. Watch it if you can, as there can be slight variations in how quickly it cooks, so it may need slightly less time. When the crust starts to puff up and it begins developing colour, it's time to take it out.

### Step 10

Let the pizza sit for just a minute or two before adding toppings, so it doesn't cool and set. Spread the sauce evenly over the pizza base using a spoon. Spread from the centre, remembering to leave half an inch at the edge all around the pizza for the crust to puff up. Scatter the slices of mozzarella evenly, then sprinkle the basil leaves on it.

### Step 11

Put the pizza back in the oven and cook for another two minutes (watch it the first time, so you can see when it looks ready). When you see the cheese melting and it smells delicious, it's ready to eat!

*Buon appetito!*