

Tante Marie's Red Pepper & Red Onion Foccacia

Ingredients

2-1/2 cups hot water
2-1/2 Tbs. yeast
pinch of sugar
6 cups flour
1 Tbs. salt
1/3 cup olive oil
2 red onions, peeled, halved and sliced
4 red bell peppers, seeded and cut in 1/2-inch strips
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
20 good quality black olives, pitted (optional)

Instructions

To make the dough, first place in a measuring cup 1/2 cup hot water (115 to 120 degrees) with the yeast and sugar. Let rest 5 to 10 minutes.

In a large bowl place 5 cups of flour with 1 Tbs. salt. Make a well in the center and in it place 2 cups hot water and half the olive oil. When the yeast mixture is bubbly, stir it into the water then stir in the flour. When the mixture comes away from the edges of the bowl, turn it out onto a wooden board and knead until you have a smooth, firm dough. You may need to add up to 1 cup more flour.

Rinse out the bowl and dry. Lightly grease the bowl and place the round of dough in it, turning so all sides get slightly greased. Cover with a towel and set in a warm place, free of drafts, to rise until double, about 1 hour.

To make the red pepper mixture, in a medium skillet, place 2 Tbs. of the olive oil, add the red onions, with a sprinkling of salt, cook 2 minutes, then add the red peppers and cook until partially wilted. Add the balsamic vinegar, and salt and pepper to taste. Remove from the heat and let cool.

Generously spread a jelly roll pan with olive oil. Punch down the dough. With the heel of your hand, spread the dough on the oiled pan. Let rest about 10 minutes. Spread the red pepper-onion mixture all over the dough. Scatter over olives, if desired. Let rise another 10 minutes. Then sprinkle over the rest of the olive oil. Bake in the top of a preheated 400 degree oven for about 20 minutes, or until golden on the bottom and the top. Let cool briefly and cut into squares.

Makes 12 servings.

© Mary Risley

The idea for this recipe comes from Noe Valley Bakery.