

MAKE AHEAD *pizza dough*

ingredients - 4 cups flour (+ more for dusting), 2 teaspoons salt, 1 teaspoon instant yeast, 2 cups warm water, 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (+ more for bowl/baking sheets)

directions - in a medium bowl, stir all dry ingredients (including yeast) with a wooden spoon. make a well in the middle and pour the warm water + 2 Tablespoons olive oil, while stirring until dough forms. cover with plastic wrap and let rise for 1 hour. dust hands and dough generously with flour and knead until dough becomes smooth and elastic (~1 minute). transfer dough to a large bowl that has been coated in olive oil (to prevent sticking). again, cover with plastic wrap and let rise at least 1 hour (longer is fine too, up to 2 hours). preheat a pizza stone to 500 for 1 hour. coat two baking sheets (13x18 in) generously with olive oil. divide dough in two and place one on each baking sheet. using your hands, firmly press the dough to fill the baking sheets. bake dough on the baking sheet resting on top of the hot pizza stone, for 10 minutes or until golden brown. remove from oven and loosen the crust with a spatula. if eating the same day, top with sauce and toppings and return to oven, this time putting the crust directly on the stone until cheese is bubbly. if eating within 24 hours, wrap pre-baked crust in tinfoil until ready to bake. again, preheat oven and pizza stone for 1 hour at 500 degrees. pre-baked crusts can also be frozen if stored in an airtight container (recommendation: cutting dough in half for easier storage).

ROASTED RED PEPPER + TOMATO *sauce*

ingredients - 1 small yellow onion (sliced), 3 cloves garlic (minced), 3 Tablespoons olive oil, 1 Tablespoon butter, 1 jar Mezzetta Roasted Red Peppers (drained), 1 can (28 oz) plum tomatoes + juice, salt and pepper to taste (until slightly sweet ~ 2 teaspoons)

directions - in a medium saucepan, sauté onions and garlic in the olive oil + butter until onions are slightly translucent. add peppers and tomatoes. with a submersion blender, blend until smooth. add salt and pepper to taste. reduce heat to low and simmer for 1 hour or until thickened.