
French Bread or Pizza Dough

- 1/2 C. warm water
- 2 pkgs, active dry yeast
- 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 4 C. hot tap water
- 2 tsp. sugar
- 2 Tbl. salt
- 9-12 C. hard-wheat or high-gluten flour

Mixing Bowl/Dough Hook

Place warm water in a small bowl. Sprinkle in the yeast and add 1/2 teaspoon sugar. Be sure that the water is just warm to the touch so as not to kill the yeast. In the mixing bowl place the hot tap water, sugar, salt, and about half of the flour. Using the dough hook, mix until smooth. When the yeast has proofed, add to the dough mixture. Continue adding flour until a stiff dough is formed. Knead on low speed until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Place in a large, lightly greased bowl, and let rise until light. Punch dough down, then separate into 4 portions. Let rest for about 15 minutes. Shape into long, oval loaves, and place on greased baking sheets. Let rise until double. Score raised loaves with long, shallow cuts. Brush with water and bake in the presence of moisture in a 400° F. oven until golden brown and done, about 45 to 50 minutes.

For pizza, pick up dough and place your fists under the ball of dough. Gently stretch the dough with the back of your fists. Work dough on outer edges to stretch to a large circle. Be careful not to make holes through the dough with your fingers. When 2 inches larger than the pan, place dough on a lightly greased pizza pan and let rest while you preheat the oven to 450° to 500° F. Prebake crust for about 5 minutes before coating with topping. Yields 4 large pizza crusts or 4 large loaves of bread.