

GRILL MASTER

By Lisa Readie Mayer

Special Delivery

Learn how to master a variety of pizzas on your cabin grill

How can you satisfy a pizza craving at the cabin when delivery is not an option and takeout is too far away? Make pizza on the grill!

Even if you don't have a wood-burning pizza oven on your patio, an ordinary gas or charcoal grill will closely replicate the high heat needed to make artisan-style pizzas at home. It's easy, fun and best of all – delicious.

Pizza can be cooked on the grill in one of two ways – directly on the hot grilling grid (it won't weep through – promise!), or on a pizza stone placed on the grid. Either way, use a pizza peel dusted with cornmeal to transfer dough.

Choose a pizza stone specially designed for the grill.



Indoor pizza stones can crack in the grill's intense heat.

For a crispier crust, grill the rolled-out dough for a minute or two on one or both sides before adding toppings. For a chewier crust, add toppings to the raw dough and then cook.

Don't want to deal with fresh dough?

Change it up with store-bought pita, tortillas, focaccia,

French bread or pre-baked pizza shells, all of which work well on the grill.

TIP
CHOOSE A PIZZA STONE SPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR THE GRILL. INDOOR PIZZA STONES CAN CRACK IN THE GRILL'S INTENSE HEAT.



Courtesy KettlePizza

GRILL CONVERSION – Instead of buying a full-size pizza oven for tasty pie at the cabin, try a grill-conversion kit like this one from KettlePizza.

For toppings, bypass boring pepperoni! Grill or smoke sliced eggplant, zucchini, peppers, tomatoes, onions, sausage, chicken, shrimp or even figs, to make more interesting embellishments. Just remember to go light on

toppings and cheese or you'll have soggy pizza.

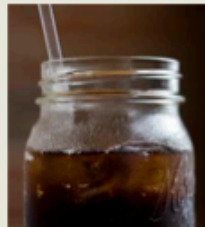
Grill pizza with the lid down to reflect heat so toppings warm and cheese melts before the crust burns.

Pizza cooks usually in less than five minutes on a hot grill. Be prepared to rotate it to a cooler spot if necessary.

CHEERS!

ROOT BEER FOR EVERYONE

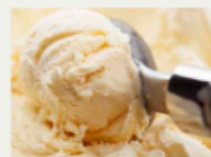
AMERICA'S MOST beloved nostalgic beverage – root beer – is fresh off a makeover. Mimicking the industrious ingenuity seen in the craft-beer industry over the past decade, craft root beers are now on store shelves across the country. Boasting notes of anise, licorice, vanilla and mild spices, each recipe from different soda makers has its own twist, some relying on organic or locally grown ingredients, but all take root beer to the next level.



To pair with grilled pizzas on a cool night, uncap a few bottles of root beer and either host a tasting of root beer flights or offer guests and the kids a variety of choices. Sipped alongside the BLT pizza recipe shown here, the result is magical: root beer's intense notes stack up well to the decadent trifecta of richness in this recipe (ranch dressing, bacon and cheese).

SERVING TIP

Root beer floats are fun for all ages. Choose vanilla bean ice cream for intense vanilla flavors to encourage the root beer's toasted notes to truly shine on the palate. A few hours before serving, chill heavy glass stein mugs in the refrigerator to help lock in the cold temperature and keep the ice cream from melting.



For an inexpensive alternative to a full-size pizza oven, consider grill-conversion kits like KettlePizza (www.kettlepizza.com) and Italia Artisan Pizza Oven (www.campchef.com), or a tabletop unit like Pizzeria Pronto (www.pizzacraft.com).

Karen Adler, co-author of the book "Patjo Pizzeria" (April 2014), suggests grilling panuozzi – rustic Italian sandwiches made with pizza dough. To make, form the dough into a 6-inch by 9-inch rectangle, then grill on a pizza stone for 2–3 minutes until browned and cooked through. Remove, slice once horizontally, and top bread halves with salami, cheese, roasted peppers or whatever you like. Return the open-faced halves to the pizza stone just long enough until cheese melts; form the sandwich, and enjoy!

No need for a pricey appliance to make hot, crispy panini sandwiches either! Place desired fixings on ciabatta rolls, sourdough or other hearty breads, and lightly brush the exterior with oil. Then, set a brick wrapped in foil on top of each sandwich to weigh it down while toasting on the grilling grid over medium heat.

Grilled BLT Flatbread Pizza

Making pizza on the grill is a fun and quick way to cook at the cabin. The grill gives pizza crust a crisp and unique flavor. Try turning an old classic, a BLT sandwich, into a pizza next time the gang is together. Use a flatbread or pita shell and add your favorite crispy bacon. Top it with fresh lettuce, tomato and a drizzle of ranch dressing. **Makes 4 each.**

- 4 tablespoons pizza or tomato sauce
- 4 flatbread or pita shells
- 4 ounces shredded mozzarella cheese
- 2 ounces shredded cheddar cheese
- ½ cup diced tomato
- 8 cooked and chopped bacon pieces
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 1 cup shredded iceberg lettuce
- ¼ cup ranch dressing

1. Spray grill with vegetable spray to season and pre-heat to medium-high heat. Only light half the grill to use it as an oven.
2. Spread 1 tablespoon of tomato sauce evenly over one flatbread or pita shell. Sprinkle 1 ounce of mozzarella cheese over it, leaving about a quarter-inch edge for crust. Add half an ounce of cheddar cheese and spread evenly.
3. Top with 1 tablespoon of diced tomatoes and 2 pieces of chopped, crisp bacon. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and a pinch of black pepper.
4. Repeat with remaining three flatbreads or pita shells.
5. Place pizzas on grill over heat and cook for 1–2 minutes. Turn them a half turn and grill another 1–2 minutes.
6. Place pizzas on the side of the grill with no heat. Close lid and cook for 3–4 minutes or until cheese is melted.
7. Remove pizzas from grill and top with lettuce and an additional tablespoon of fresh tomatoes. Drizzle ranch dressing over the top of the pizzas in a crisscross pattern and serve.



Photo by Patrick Moore

Chef Patrick Moore

THREE SELECTIONS

1 MAINE ROOT ROOT BEER, Portland, Maine, touts fair trade certified organic cane juice, plus spices and sweet vanilla notes. This root beer is packed with layers of anise flavors that slide into a spicy finish. www.maineroot.com

2 NATURAL BREW DRAFT ROOT BEER, Chico, Calif., has licorice and anise notes combined with vanilla, birch and wintergreen for a toasty and cozy taste. Of these three, this one has the crispest mouth feel. www.natural-brew.com

3 REED'S, INC. VIRGIL'S ROOT BEER, Los Angeles, Calif., is the most balanced of the three root beers tasted here. It's also the earthiest, with easily detectable – not to mention delightful – anise and licorice notes. www.reedsinc.com ■

Kristine Hansen

