

Herbed Focaccia with Caramelized Onion & Goat Cheese

Adapted from Tyler Florence's Stirring the Pot

Makes 8 slices/servings

For the dough:

Unbleached all-purpose flour - 3 1/2 cups

Dry active yeast - 2 tsp

Honey - 2 tsp

Salt- 1 tsp

Fresh thyme leaves - 1 tsp

Dried oregano - 1 tsp

Ancho chilli powder - 1 tsp

Olive Oil - 1 tbsp

Warm water - 1 cup

For the topping:

Red onions - 4, medium, cut into slivers

Goat cheese - about 2 oz

Parmesan cheese - 2 to 3 tbsp, shredded

Balsamic vinegar - a turn of the pan

Olive oil - 2 tbsp

Salt and pepper to taste

- Dissolve the honey in the warm water, then gently stir in the yeast. Place aside for 5 to 10 minutes. If the yeast are active, there will be some foam on the surface of the water.
- Sift the flour and salt into a bowl. Add the thyme leaves, dried oregano and ancho chilli powder.
- Slowly add in the warm water with yeast, stirring to combine together. When all the water has been incorporated, knead the mixture into a sticky dough.
- On the counter or on a base, sprinkle some flour. Pat the dough onto the surface and knead well, until the stickiness of the dough reduces considerably. Knead the dough for a bit until smoothish to the touch. Then add a tablespoon of oil and finish kneading the dough to develop a smooth surface. Punch the dough to flatten a bit, then fold it onto itself loosely.
- Place the dough in a bowl. Cover with a towel and keep in a warm place for about an hour for the dough to rise.
- Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil in a large pan on medium heat. Toss in the slivers of onion and toss to coat.
- Season well with salt and pepper. Mix well and then let the onions caramelize to a rusty gold, then to a deep purple. This should take about 30 minutes. About 10 minutes before they are done, pour in the balsamic vinegar and toss with the onions to coat.
- Check the dough at about an hour. It should be considerably larger, about twice its original size.
- Layer some parchment paper onto a baking sheet and rub it with some olive oil. Put the dough out on the pan and push it out to the edges with your fingers to flatten it out onto the pan, about 1/2" or so thick. Dimple the surface of the dough gently with your fingers.
- Cover the flattened dough with plastic wrap, then the towel and set aside for 15 minutes.
- Set the oven to heat at 400°F.
- Uncover the dough. Spread out the caramelized onions out to cover the surface of the dough. Crumble the goat cheese over the onions. Sprinkle the parmesan cheese over the entire surface.
- Place into the heated oven and bake for about 15 to 20 minutes, until the bread goes golden brown.

Serve by itself or with a side salad.