

Semi-Homemade Pizza for a Lazy Saturday

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A post on my cooking blog about semi-homemade pizza.

Around here, weekends are usually spent lounging lazily around our apartment – never putting on real pants or getting any more fresh air than is inhaled while taking the trash out. This last weekend was no different, especially considering the homework and studying load we both ended up with.

The original plan for Saturday night's dinner was to make a delicious meal of mashed potatoes, asparagus, and short ribs. It would be a courageous endeavor, considering our penchant for laziness and the fact that we didn't even have everything to make such an intense meal.

For some reason, our motivation level wasn't high enough to get over our laziness hump and we instead decided to raid our fridge (**a skill unto itself**), finding the forgotten pizza ingredients that we had bought the week before.

So we threw together what we had and actually ended up with some pretty decent semi-homemade pizzas.

Here's how to make your own.

Preheat your oven to 350 F (even though it says 450 F on the package of pre-made pizza crust).

Lay out your **store-bought pizza crust** (or pre-made if you have those skills). Brush **olive oil** around the edges (or just use the underside of a dinner spoon if you don't have a brush). Sprinkle **ground garlic** around the edges. This will make your pizza taste delicious all the way to the last bite.

For the sauce: I combined **store-bought pizza sauce** with some **tomato pesto**, a **tablespoon of minced garlic**, and a bit of **grated Parmesan cheese**. Mix this all together with some **spices** (I suggest onion powder, pepper, sea salt, and a dash of basic Italian seasoning – it is pizza after all) and spread it onto your crusts, leaving about an inch of crust.

Here's where you can go pretty much any direction you want with extra toppings. I chopped up some **chipotle and cheddar sausage**, **onions**, and **mushrooms**. These were thrown on with a **store-bought grated cheese mix** and **pepperoni**. **Peppers** would also be good, but rummaging around in your fridge may yield strange results.

The trick, though, is how to layer the toppings for the best taste distribution and edibility. While this is also up to you, I like to make my pizzas like I make my nachos: levels. On top of the sauce, put a thin layer of cheese, then lay down your flattest meat – in my case the pepperoni. Don't cover the whole thing, but spread them out pretty evenly; you won't need very many. Then put down your other toppings. I like to spread them far enough apart that each bite has a unique taste. Top that with a good amount of cheese, sprinkling on some more spices of choice. Don't be afraid if your creation looks like a mountain; it'll flatten out once it's baked.

To bake: **cook at 350 F for six minutes** and then bump up the temperature to **450 F for another five to six minutes**. Keep an eye on it though – there's a fine line between the perfectly toasted pizza and burnt crust. Take it out when it's fast approaching that line.

Serve with some kind of vegetable or salad and continue to enjoy your lazy Saturday (a little pizza grease on your lounge pants isn't going to hurt anyone).

Happy pizza-ing!