

# Focaccia

## Ingredients- For the Dough

- 5 cups (22.5 ounces) bread flour
- 2 teaspoons (.5 ounce) salt
- 2 teaspoons (.22 ounce) instant yeast
- 6 tablespoons (3 ounces) olive oil
- 2 cups (16 ounces) water, at room temperature
- ¼ to ½ cup Herb Oil (recipe below)

**To Make the Herb Oil:** Warm 2 cups of olive oil (it does not have to be extra virgin) to about 100 degrees F. Add 1 cup of chopped fresh herbs such as basil, parsley, oregano, tarragon, rosemary, thyme, sage, or any combination of those. *(Alternatively, you can substitute 1/3 cup of dried herbs instead of using fresh herbs. Or, you can use a combination of fresh and dried herbs).* To the herbs and warmed oil, add 1 tablespoon kosher salt, 1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper, and 5 or 6 cloves of chopped fresh garlic. If desired, you may also add 1 teaspoon of paprika, 1 teaspoon of ground cayenne pepper, 1 tablespoon of fennel seeds, or 1 teaspoon of onion powder. Store any leftover herb oil in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

## Directions

1. Stir together the flour, salt, and yeast in the bowl of an electric mixer.
2. Add the oil and water and mix on low speed using the mixer's paddle attachment.
3. Switch to the dough hook and mix on medium speed for 5 to 7 minutes, or as long as it takes to create a smooth, sticky dough. The dough should clear the sides of the bowl but stick to the bottom of the bowl. *(You might need to add additional flour to firm up the dough enough to clear the sides of the bowl, but the dough should still be quite soft and sticky).*
4. Sprinkle enough flour on the counter to make a bed about 6 inches square. Using a dough scraper or spatula dipped in water, transfer the sticky dough to the bed of flour and dust liberally with flour, patting the dough into a rectangle. Let the dough rest for 5 minutes.
5. Coat your hands with flour and stretch the dough from each end to twice its size. Fold it, letter style, over itself to return it to a rectangular shape. Mist the top of the dough with spray oil, again dust with flour, and loosely cover with plastic wrap. Let the dough rest for 30 minutes.
6. Stretch and fold the dough letter style again; mist with spray oil, dust with flour, and cover and let rest for 30 minutes.
7. Repeat step #6 one more time.
8. Allow the covered dough to ferment on the counter for 1 hour. It should swell but not necessarily double in size.
9. Line a 17×12 inch sheet pan with baking parchment. Drizzle ¼ cup of olive oil over the parchment paper, and spread it with your hands or a pastry brush so that it covers the surface. Lightly oil your hands, and using a pastry dough scraper, lift the dough off the counter and transfer it to the sheet pan, maintaining the rectangle shape as much as possible. Spoon half of the Herb Oil that you made (recipe above) all over the dough.
10. Using your fingertips, dimple the dough and spread it to fill the pan simultaneously. Do not use the flat part of your hands – only use your fingertips – to avoid tearing the dough. Try to keep the thickness of the dough as uniform as possible across the surface. If the dough becomes too springy, let it rest for 15 minutes and then proceed with dimpling. It's okay if you can't fill the pan 100%, especially in the corners, because as the dough relaxes and proofs, it will naturally spread out. If necessary, add more Herb Oil to ensure that the entire surface of the dough is coated with oil.
11. Loosely cover the pan with plastic wrap and refrigerate the dough overnight (or for up to 3 days).

12. Remove the pan from the refrigerator 3 hours before baking. Drizzle a little more Herb Oil over the surface of the dough and dimple it in. This should allow you to fill the pan completely with the dough to a thickness of approximately ½ inch. Cover the pan with plastic wrap and proof the dough at room temperature for 3 hours, or until the dough doubles in size and rises to a thickness of nearly 1 inch.
13. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees Fahrenheit with the oven rack on the middle shelf.
14. Place the pan in the oven. Lower the oven temperature to 450 degrees F and bake for 10 minutes. Rotate the pan 180 degrees and continue baking the focaccia for 5-10 minutes, or until it begins to turn a light golden brown. The internal temperature of the dough should register above 200 degrees F in the center.
15. Remove the pan from the oven and immediately transfer the focaccia out of the pan onto a cooling rack. Allow the focaccia to cool for at least 20 minutes before slicing or serving.

**Makes:** one 17×12 inch focaccia

**Source:** Cooking with Karen; Originally from [The Bread Baker's Apprentice](#)