

HOW TO TO GIVE YOUR CUSTOMERS TOP QUALITY PIZZA AND GET THEM COMING BACK FOR MORE



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First things first; quality matters! Along with speed of service and consistency, it is part of the balance of things that your customers consciously and subconsciously weigh up whilst eating at your restaurant that determines whether or not they will return.

Repeat business is the holy grail of building a profitable business over time. So giving the customer the quality they expect is essential to the long term viability of any food business.

Pizza is a simple product to prepare and serve, but there are a few 'critical control points' to bear in mind when thinking about your system and how to guarantee great quality pizza, every time. Dough management is probably the most important thing to bear in mind, so let's look at the best way to manage your dough for best results.



Dough Management

Dough contains yeast, which is a living product. How the yeast interacts with the dough is important to the end result. Too little yeast activity and the dough will be flat, hard to use and will lack flavour. Too much yeast activity will eventually blow the dough and make it hard to work with as well as affecting the quality of the finished product.

So we need to find the 'sweet spot' where the dough is suitably risen and developed, easy to work with and will make a fantastic pizza. We have done extensive testing with our dough balls and they have been developed to be in optimal condition for as long as possible to give you the best chance at making the best quality pizza.

Our dough balls are supplied frozen and for best results, we recommend they are removed from the freezer and put into dough trays the night before being used and then defrosted in the refrigerator overnight. The following day they should be fully defrosted. At this stage the yeast is still recovering from the freezing process and the dough

will not be ready to use. It needs to re-activate and this can be done using two methods.

- ▶ Removing the dough from the refrigerator and allowing it to prove in a warmer environment for around 4-5 hours.
- ▶ 'Retarding' the dough in the refrigerator at low temperature for up to 3 days before being brought to room temperature and used.

The longer you are able to leave your dough to develop and mature, the better the final result will be. This isn't always possible of course and storage or space constraints may stop you being able to do this, but if you can find a way to leave your dough for 2/3 days in the fridge before using, it will improve the quality of the final product considerably.

So in summary, for quickest results, defrost your dough balls overnight before bringing to room temperature the following day and using. This will give good results.

For better results, defrost your

dough balls overnight before allowing a further 24 hours to develop in the fridge. Remove from the fridge and bring to room temperature. This will give very good results.

To go one step further, allow your dough 48/72 hours in the fridge before removing and bringing to room temperature before using. This will give exceptional results.

By the way, if you are wondering whether frozen dough means lower quality, we have tested both fresh and frozen dough balls on a group of expert pizza chefs. Not one of them could tell the difference in a blind test.

Our dough is flash frozen within minutes of being made, which prevents ice crystals forming and maintains complete product integrity after defrosting.

HOW TO STRETCH YOUR DOUGH BALLS FOR BEST RESULTS

How to stretch your dough will depend on a few factors and what skill levels you have in your kitchen. There are 3 options for stretching your dough.

- ▶ Use a rolling pin
- ▶ Stretch it by hand
- ▶ Stretch it using a pizza press or dough roller



Remember, always aim to WOW the customer, and always be looking at ways to increase the chances of them coming back to you in the future.

If you have skilled labour and experienced chefs who are confident and competent at rolling out dough by hand, then stick with it. Rolling by hand gives the best results as it means lighter dough that will rise better in the oven and make a great pizza.

If your chefs don't have these skills and are currently using a rolling pin, then consider training them to stretch by hand or if this is difficult, consider buying a pizza press. Using a rolling pin takes all the air out of the dough and makes a flat, rather characterless pizza crust after baking. We would not recommend doing it this way.

A pizza press can be a good way to produce great pizzas without needing skilled labour. But it does require space and a capital expenditure. If this isn't feasible, then consider switching to a part-baked pizza base that does not require any stretching at all.

Sturdy Foods can provide you with a superb quality part-baked sourdough pizza base that simply requires topping before being baked in your oven. It gives great quality results and is also super quick to prepare and serve. Contact us for more details.

How you best manage your dough and how you serve it is down to your individual operation and its circumstances and constraints. But hopefully the information in this article will help you decide how to give your customers the best quality you possibly can.



To find out how we could potentially help you attract more customers or for any other queries related to this guide, call us on 01765 641 200 or email info@sturdyfoods.co.uk