



# A crust above

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PHOTO: GUY LAWRENCE FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

PERSONAL CHEF

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David Hawksworth is a man who has made his name as a chef in Vancouver's best restaurant, but he keeps his favourite kitchen toy at home. Six months ago, he bought himself a Forno Bravo wood-burning pizza oven, and he has been playing with it ever since. "I get it really hot with three types of hardwood: maple, alder and birch," he says gleefully. "It makes a great pizza!"

Pizza nights at his house are on Sundays, and the festivities start early. "We invite people for around 4 o'clock, and serve pizzas at 5," says the born-and-raised Vancouverite who trained abroad under superchefs Marco Pierre White and Raymond Blanc before returning home. He, his wife and their five-year-old son invite friends and neighbours to enjoy pizza and the view of English Bay from their West Vancouver home. Afterwards, Hawksworth, who is an avid fisherman, sometimes serves a roasted salmon or halibut that he caught himself.

When he isn't working or entertaining, Hawksworth spends weekends outdoors skiing with his family and enjoying the killer West Coast scenery. All of this from a guy whose restaurant serves 120 covers at lunch and 140 at dinner every night. He makes it look easy as pie.

## HOMEMADE PIZZA

The dough will be cooked in a wood-burning oven, which means firing up a wood-burning oven, the Vancouver chef tells **Bonny Reichert**

**PREP TIME: 3 HOURS**

**(INCLUDING RESTING TIME)**

**READY IN: 3½ HOURS**

**1½ cups plus 2 tbsp warm water**

**2½ tsp salt, divided**

**¾ tsp dry active yeast**

**4 cups Molino Caputo Tipo 00 flour**

**(or other high-gluten pizza flour)**

**1 can (28 oz) San Marzano tomatoes**

**¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper**

**1 tsp oregano**

**Toppings, such as burrata or bocconcini cheese, dried tomatoes, cubed guanciale or pancetta, shaved asparagus, fresh basil, Parmesan and olive oil for drizzling**

**In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the water, 2 teaspoons salt and yeast, and stir. Gradually add flour, mixing on low speed for two minutes, medium high for 5 minutes and low again for 2 minutes. (Alternatively, you can prepare the dough by hand.) Cover the dough and leave it in a warm place to rise for 1½ to 2 hours or until doubled in volume.**

**Punch down the dough and push out any air bubbles. Knead it a couple of times on a floured surface and cut into three equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball, then stretch the top of the ball down and around, pinching the two ends together to make a tight outer "skin." Set balls seam-side down, dust with flour and store under a damp towel or oil-greased plastic wrap. (Dough balls should remain moist.) Let rest for about an hour or until the dough becomes soft, elastic and easy to work with. (The dough can be made in advance and stored in the refrigerator.)**

**Meanwhile, combine tomatoes, ½ teaspoon salt, pepper and oregano and purée.**

**Set pizza stone on the lower rack of the oven and heat to the highest setting. On a well-floured surface, roll out dough balls to a thickness of ½ to ¾ inch. Build pizzas one at a time, spreading each with a thin layer of sauce before adding torn cheese and desired toppings. Drizzle with olive oil and slide into the hot oven for 2 to 5 minutes or until the crust is crispy and cheese is melted and bubbling.**

**Makes 3 pizzas.**

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You don't need a wood-burning oven to make these perfect pies. Just get an inexpensive pizza stone and turn up your oven as hot as possible.

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