



Manna
FROM DEVON
COOKING SCHOOL

WOOD FIRED OVEN COOKING

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WOOD BURNING PIZZA OVENS AVAILABLE FORM DINGLEY DELL ENTERPRISES

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Fire-in-the-oven Cooking

Fire-in-the-oven cooking (350°C and above) is used for baking pizza, pizza-like flatbreads and certain types of appetizers, all of which cook in a couple of minutes. The goal with this type of cooking is to completely fill the floor and dome with heat, build up a large sized bed of coals and maintain a large fire where the flame reaches to top of the dome. There are two ways to know that an oven is ready to cook pizza. First, when the oven dome itself has gone clear, and there is no visible black soot. At this point, you should move the fire to one side, while continuing to maintain a large fire going with the flame reaching the middle of the oven. Alternatively, if you are using an infrared thermometer, the floor should read approximately 350°C – 375°C. Pizzas are baked right on the floor next to the fire. Leave the oven completely open, and add wood every 15-20 minutes to maintain a large flame.

Roasting (at higher heat than Baking)

Roasting (320°C – 230°C) is used for dishes where you want to sear meats, or brown vegetables and casseroles before either covering them with a lid, or with liquids, and for dishes that will cook completely before the outside either burns or becomes too brown. Roasting temperature range between 320°C and 230°C, or lower than high heat fire-in-the-oven pizza cooking, and higher than traditional baking. In order to roast, first bring you oven up to pizza temperature and then allow it to drop in temperature and the fire to burn down, but not out. Push the coals to one side. The combination of a fully fired oven, along with a low fire enables you to sear and brown dishes, and then allow the oven to slowly drop in temperature for longer cooking. There should be no visible black on the dome, a medium sized bed of coals and a small flame of 2"-4" high. The door may be left off for shorter roasting times (under one hour) or positioned inside the arch opening to help regulate the heat for hours of roasting. Add small pieces of wood as needed to maintain temperature. You can move your pans around inside the oven, and remember that the oven will be hotter on the side with the fire and/or coals, so you may have to rotate your pans.

Baking (at conventional oven temperatures)

Baking (260°C and down) is used for baking bread, desserts, smaller roast meats, beans and legumes, and pasta dishes at conventional oven temperatures. After fully firing your oven, carefully rake out the hot coals and brush out the oven. If you wish, you can swab the deck with a damp, not wet, towel. Your oven can now cook gently and consistently with the heat retained in the oven dome and floor, as the temperature falls. Close the door tightly against the oven opening to hold in heat and steam.

Grilling

Your brick oven makes a great grill. By raking a layer of hot coals across the cooking floor at the front of your oven, and sliding a free standing cast iron grill into the oven, you can enjoy grilling that sets seared grill marks, and seals in moisture for food that is crisp and not dried out. With heat from the grill itself, from the coals and radiating from oven dome above, the wood fired oven is a great BBQ.

MOROCCAN FLATBREADS

While your oven is still hot (250°C) cook these flat breads which will only take about 12 minutes to cook.

Makes 6 breads.

- Strong white flour 750g
- Honey 50g
- Salt 15g
- Dried yeast 7g

Or

- Fresh yeast 15g
- Water 200 ml
- Milk 200 ml
- Yoghurt 50 ml
- Cardamom, Chopped lemon zest, Pistachios, Nigella Seeds, Aniseed, Anise, or other spices to taste.

1. Gently warm the milk and water and dissolve the yeast in it.
2. Mix the salt into the flour, add the honey and enough of the milk and water to make a soft dough
3. Knead until smooth springy (10 minutes). Add the spices at the end of the kneading and work in to distribute
4. Put into a lightly oil bowl covered with a cloth. Leave to prove until double in size. – At least one hour.
5. Knead again, divide into 6 and shape into circles. Leave to rest for 5 minutes.
6. Work each dough ball with floured hands to make a round not more than 1 cm thick
7. Place on floured table or cloths, cover and leave to prove for 30 minutes
8. Cook on the base of the oven for 10 – 12 minutes.
9. Cover with a cloth to keep warm and soft.

PIZZA DOUGH:

Pizzas should be cooked in a very hot oven with a good fire licking over the top. If using a very hot oven (500°C +) you will need to bake very thin crust pizzas. 350°C to 400°C is a good temperature to aim for for most pizza cooking.

- 500g strong bread flour
- 325gr warm water
- 10g salt
- 10g yeast

1. Mix 250g flour with 5g yeast and 150ml water. Mix, knead for 5 minutes then leave overnight to ferment
2. Add the remaining flour, yeast, salt and water. Mix and knead until you achieve a smooth and very elastic dough. Cover and leave to prove for 1 – 2 hours.
3. Weigh out the dough into 150g balls. Shape into rounds and rest on the bench for 10 – 15 minutes.
4. Shape into pizza rounds and top as desired.
5. Once topped cook immediately to avoid soggy bottoms.
6. At 400°C your pizza should cook in a couple of minutes.

BAKED SCALLOPS WITH LEMON, CHILLI AND MINT

Scallops cook really well at high temperature, whether in a searingly hot pan or in a hot oven. Get your oven up to a good 230°C to 250°C.

Two scallops make a nice starter or snack sized portion for each person. This recipe is for four people.

- Whites and corals of 8 scallops, cleaned
 - Juice and zest (finely chopped) 1 lemon
 - 1 small fresh red chilli, finely chopped
 - 1tbsp chopped mint
 - 1tbsp chopped parsley
 - Pinch of salt
 - 4 scallop shells.
1. Heat the wood fired or conventional oven to 230°C
 2. Place two scallop whites and two corals in each shell, sprinkle with the lemon zest and chilli. Season with a pinch of salt
 3. Just before baking add a squeeze of lemon
 4. Place the shells in a roasting tin or on a baking sheet and bake in the hot oven for 5 – 6 minutes.
 5. Sprinkle with fresh herbs and serve immediately.

WOODFIRED OVEN BAKED BLACK BREAM

Black Bream is considered by many to be equal in taste and texture to its more popular cousin the Sea Bass but it carries a much lower price tag, usually coming in at less than half the price. It's a firm, meaty fish with beautiful, shimmering silver skin and bright, white flesh. Stocks of Bream are very healthy so you can eat it with a clear conscience.

A medium sized bream weighing about 700g will serve two people. A wood fired oven at about 200°C will keep your fish deliciously moist as well as adding a hint of smokiness to the flesh.

- 1 medium black bream, about 700g
 - A splash of dry white wine
 - 3 sprigs fresh rosemary
 - 2 cloves garlic, peeled
 - Few sprigs fresh fennel or dill
 - 3 slices lemon
 - Drizzle of olive oil
 - Salt and pepper
1. Heat your wood fired oven. If using a conventional oven heat to 200°C.
 2. Scale, clean and wash the bream.
 3. Put the rosemary and dill or fennel in the belly cavity along with the garlic and the lemon. Season well.
 4. Place in a roasting tin and add the splash of wine and drizzle with olive oil.
 5. Bake in a hot for 15-20 minutes. Test by pressing down gently on the fish until you feel the flakes of flesh breaking apart under gentle pressure.
 6. Serve immediately

KLEFTICO LAMB

This dish is perfect for a falling oven starting at less than 200°C, then falling to 150°C or less. Cook for a minimum of three hours or leave overnight.

- 1 lemon, juice and chopped zest.
 - 1 tbsp chopped fresh oregano/marjoram
 - 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
 - 2 bay leaves
 - 1 bulb of garlic sliced in two
 - 1 teaspoon salt (or, to taste)
 - ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 1 shoulder of lamb
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 2 large onions, thinly sliced
 - 2/3 cup dry white wine
 - 500g potatoes
1. Mix together the lemon juice, oregano, thyme, salt and pepper and rub over the lamb.
 2. Place the lamb and garlic in a casserole dish with a close fitting lid.
 3. Scatter the sliced onions & bay leaves around the lamb, then pour the white wine on top.
 4. Put a piece of greaseproof paper over the dish then put the lid on to form a good seal.
 5. Cook for a minimum of three hours adding the potatoes after about two hours.
 6. The dish is cooked when the lamb is falling off the bone but improves with longer, slower cooking.

ROAST CHICKEN

For roasting chicken the ideal would be a falling oven, starting at about 250°C to 230°C and falling to 200°C or less.

- 1 medium sized chicken (1.5 kilos)
 - 4 cloves garlic
 - 1 sprig rosemary or a bunch of thyme
 - 1 lemon quartered
 - Olive oil
 - Salt and Pepper
1. Wash the chicken, rub with olive oil and a split clove of garlic.
 2. Put the garlic, rosemary or thyme and lemon into the cavity.
 3. Season the whole bird with salt and pepper
 4. Put into the hot oven for 20 minutes then cover with foil if necessary to avoid scorching and continue cooking for another 50 minutes to an hour until the juices run clear. If covered be sure to uncover for the last 15 – 20 minutes to crisp up the skin.
 5. Rest and serve

BABA GHANOUSH

We put the aubergines in a hot oven and cooked them until they were tender. You don't need to oil or prick them – just put them in as they are.

- 2 aubergines
 - Handful of fresh basil
 - 2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
 - Olive oil
 - Juice of a lemon
 - Salt and pepper
1. Cook the aubergines in the woodfired oven until tender.
 2. Cool slightly and peel off the skin. Squeeze out any juices and put in a food processor.
 3. Whizz up with the basil, garlic and lemon juice until smooth and drizzle in about 2-3 tbsp olive oil.
 4. Season well and serve with fresh flat breads or pitas

POTATOES PROVENCAL

We cooked this dish in a fairly hot oven (probably 230°C) for about 1 ¼ hours but it could easily go into a lower oven for longer. This amount makes 8 – 10 servings with some left over to fry up for brekkie on Sunday morning.

- 1 kilo potatoes, peeled and sliced
 - 2 courgettes, sliced
 - 6 tomatoes, sliced
 - 2 large cloves of garlic, sliced
 - ½ glass white wine
 - ½ glass vegetable stock
 - Salt and pepper
1. Layer the potatoes, courgettes, tomatoes and garlic in an ovenproof dish seasoning each layer as you go.
 2. Add the wine and stock
 3. Cover tightly with foil and cook until the potatoes are soft then uncover and continue to cook to give some colour to the top.

WOOD OVEN SQUID

Heating oil in the still flaming oven is not for the faint hearted. Ensure you have thick gloves or gauntlets, a thick oven cloth which can be used as a fire blanket and good shoes (flip flops not recommended).

- 2 squid cleaned, scored and cut into bite sized portions.
 - Chickpea (gram) flour
 - Salt and Pepper
 - Cayenne Pepper
 - ½ litre sunflower oil
 - Lemon or garlic mayonnaise.
1. Heat the oil in a deep pan/thick wok.
 2. Dry and excess water off the squid then toss the prepared squid in well seasoned chickpea flour. Make sure the squid is well covered but then shake off the excess with a colander.
 3. Test the oil is hot enough with a single piece of squid, it should immediately fizzle when it hits the oil.
 4. Cook small batches of squid at a time (a handful) so that the oil does not cool too much.
 5. Cook each batch for 30 – 40 seconds
 6. Serve immediately with lemon or garlic mayonnaise.

If the thought of the hot oil is too much then searing the squid in a hot pan may work better:

1. Toss the squid with a small amount of sunflower oil and seasoning. You need just enough oil to lightly coat the squid.
2. Heat a thick bottomed pan in the oven.
3. When smoking hot add small batches of squid. Cook for 50 -60 seconds tossing a couple of times during the cooking.