

FOOD IS LOVE

SASSY, SNARKY AND SAVORY ADVICE ON HOW COOKING MAKES US BETTER HUMANS



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Bobber's Stromboli
from
FOOD IS LOVE



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stromboli basics

Nearly every culture has a variation of dough plus filling. The stromboli is a braided dough with many variations of delicious innards. Here are the standard instructions for four of my favorite stromboli recipes.

Lay out the dough: Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Be brave and open the scary loud-popping tube of thin pizza dough (or hand it to your kid to open, hiding your face in shame—whatevs), spreading it open into a large, even rectangle on either parchment or non-stick foil-lined baking sheet. Splash on about 1 TB of the evoo and use the back of a spoon to spread it evenly over the entire top of the dough. This is the perfect time to jazz up the dough with spices that complement the rest of the ingredients!

Fill the center: Divide the dough mentally into thirds lengthwise. All the interior ingredients will go along the center third, so use your best Barbara Billingsly *Airplane!* quotes while sprinkling shit along the “runway.” Yes, your ingredients will speak jive.

Braidy Bit: It’s go time for the braid. First, take a sharp knife and cut matching tentacles about 1” wide down each long side of the rectangle. You’ll end up with about 12 cuts (13 tentacles) on each side. Start at the top right and pull the tentacle across to meet the beginning of the opposite tentacle. Bring the left tentacle across to meet the right, the repeat the process back and forth until you’ve reached the bottom. On the last ten-

tacle, create a butt and tuck the end under the opposite side, squishing the bottom seam together to prevent the innards from spilling out the bum.

When the tentacles are in place and you have an awesome little mummy wrap, drizzle the drizzle of choice and do the back-of-spoon thing again to spread it evenly.

Bake and Top: Place the Stromboli in the oven and bake for about 6 minutes, then turn the pan so it finishes evenly for another 5 or so minutes. When the crust is beautifully golden brown, remove from oven and place on a cooling rack for 5ish minutes. Move to a cutting board and slice into breadstick-width chunks for serving.



spinach & prosciutto stromboli

Bobber's 'boli, all grown up.

Having learned the 'boli basics from a 9 year-old kid, I took a leap beyond the traditional pepperoni and thought about how I could level up the filling. Alternative pork and some greens sounded like a good start, so spinach and prosciutto Stromboli was born.

1 tube thin crust Pillsbury pizza dough
2 C fresh spinach, wilted
1 5oz package prosciutto
2 C mozzarella cheese, divided
2 TB parmesan cheese
2 TB evoo, divided
1 TB plus 1 tsp Italian seasoning (the grindy kind)
Marinara sauce for dipping

Directions

After you've laid out the dough (see page 190), grind 1 tsp of Italian seasoning over the evoo. Fill a shallow pan with ½ inch

of water and get it simmering over medium heat. Drop the spinach in and DO NOT WALK AWAY. Move it around with tongs until it starts to soften and wilt, about 45 seconds. Remove the wilted bits to a paper towel-lined plate to dry off a minute.

Sprinkle half of the mozzarella cheese down the center of the runway. Peel off a strip of prosciutto and bunch it up a bit, evenly placing the porky pillows along the center. Top the prosciutto with the wilted spinach, then cover with the remaining mozzarella. Wrap it up, mummy style (see page 190), grind on 1 tsp more Italian seasoning, then sprinkle the parmesan cheese over the top. Bake and finish like page 191 instructs.

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any shaved deli meat would be a welcome substitute or addition

Serves: 4
Pairs with: a third date with someone you are trying to impress.
Consideration: Tasty leftovers.

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pear & walnut stromboli
man buns optional for baking.

Being a giant fan of craft breweries, I'm always tickled when I can have a beer *and* delicious food. New Holland Brewery in Grand Rapids, MI had a flatbread pizza on their menu years ago that featured thin pear slices, walnut chunks and a honey swirl. I upcycled the idea into a Stromboli, using the honey as a final drizzle on the braid. It's stupid good (especially with a Hoptronix beer).

- 1 tube thin crust Pillsbury pizza dough
- 1 Anjou or other sweet pear, sliced thin and seeds removed
- ½ C arugula
- 1/3 C diced walnuts
- ½ C shredded parmesan cheese, divided
- 1/8 C gorgonzola cheese
- Ground black pepper
- 2 TB evoo, divided
- 1 TB honey

Serves: 4
Pairs with: a spoiled pomeranian.
Consideration: excellent bougie brunch fare.

Lay out the magic dough (see page 190), then grind some fresh black pepper over the evoo.

Sprinkle half of the cheese down the runway, then check your Vector, Victor for the thinly sliced pears. Arrange them in a pretty layer so they're juuuuust slightly overlapping, but not too overcrowded. Toss the walnuts over the pears. Arugula is next, followed by dots of the gorgonzola. Rock the braidy bit (See page 190).

Sprinkle the other half of the parmesan cheese over the top, then do a pretty swishy thing with the honey. Hit it one more time with black pepper. Follow the baking instructions on page 191 and dig in!



no arugula?
spinach or
basil work
great!

Bobber's Stromboli

is that the one with the mummy wrap?

M

y dear friend & book manager Sara's stepson Bobber learned how to make Stromboli to earn a Boy Scout badge at age 9. Luckily, he shared the recipe and technique with me one evening as Sara and I were working on my first book. "He's making us dinner?" I asked her. "Like ya do," she replied. I watched carefully as junior chef Bobber kicked ass in the kitchen and realized that anyone can rock a Stromboli.

1 tube thin crust
Pillsbury pizza dough
1 C pepperoni
2 C mozzarella cheese, divided
2 TB parmesan cheese
2 TB evoo, divided
1 TB, plus 1 tsp Italian
seasoning (the grindy kind)
Marinara sauce for dipping

Serves: 4

Pairs with: a hoppy craft beer,
like M-43 from Old Nation.
Consideration: if a 9 year-old
can make this, you can too.

After you've laid out the dough (see page 190), grind about 1 TB of the Italian seasoning over the evoo.

Sprinkle half of the mozzarella cheese down the center third runway, then check your Vector, Victor for the pepperoni. Arrange them in a pretty layer so they're juuuust slightly overlapping, but not too overcrowded. Top the pepperoni with the remaining mozzarella and clutch your pearls. See braidy bit instructions on page 190.

Grind on 1 tsp more Italian seasoning, then sprinkle the parmesan cheese over the top. Bake and finish like page 191 instructs you. Serve with marina sauce for dipping.

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nutella strombooty
is there really such a thing as too much
Nutella, mama?

When my teenage niece Rae would visit during school vacations, I would give her cooking lessons. Stromboli in all forms is a fun meal, so I taught her the dessert version to try out at home. Forgetting the proper term for the meal, she later texted this: "Aunt Leslie, what's the strombooty thing again?" Yup, that'll do.

1 tube thin crust
Pillsbury pizza dough
4 TB nutella
¾ C whipped cream cheese (an
8oz container is about 1 cup)
1 TB cinnamon, divided

Serves: 4
Pairs with: a break up.
Consideration: though tempting, slathering on too much cream cheese makes for squishy 'boli.

Prep the dough for basic 'boli as outlined on page 190. Sprinkle cinnamon in a light layer evenly over the entire top of the dough.

Dot the 4 tablespoons of Nutella evenly down the center runway like gingerbread buttons, then check your Vector, Victor and spread the chocolatey goo with a spatula down the center.

Next, splat ¾ of a tub of whipped cream cheese in the middle and spread it evenly down the runway. Sprinkle the remaining cinnamon over the top. Braid it up (see page 190), then bake and finish (see page 191).

Serve with the strawberry goo, found on page 200 and some aerosol whipped cream.



you can totally
top with choco-
late syrup, too