

Mexican Chicken Pizza

*Courtesy of **In Our Grandmothers' Kitchens***

Ingredients:

for the crust:

2 1-pound packages of commercial pizza dough (make your own if you want to; I got lazy)

for the black beans:

extra-virgin olive oil as need for sautéing
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
1 bay leaf (optional)
1 teaspoon ground cumin or cumin seed
1/2 teaspoon salt
several turns of the pepper grinder
1/2 cup chicken stock
1 15-ounce can black beans (with liquid or partially drained; it depends on how moist you like your pizza topping!)

for the chicken:

1/4 cup chicken stock
2 to 3 cups cooked chicken, shredded
1 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin or cumin seed

for assembly:

the black bean mixture above
12 ounces shredded cheese (a mixture of Monterey Jack and cheddar works well)
the chicken mixture above
1 7-ounce can chopped green chiles
1 6-ounce can pitted ripe olives, drained and chopped into little rings

optional garnishes:

salsa fresca (or jarred salsa if fresh is unavailable)
sour cream
guacamole (we didn't have it and thus didn't use it, but it would be good!)
minced fresh cilantro

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Instructions:

Bring the pizza dough to room temperature and preheat the oven as indicated in your dough instructions.

While the oven is preheating do the quick cooking of the beans and the chicken. Start with the bean mixture. In a 2-quart saucepan with a fairly wide bottom (so you can start by sautéing) heat a splash of oil over medium-high heat until it begins to shimmer. Throw in the onion and garlic pieces, and sauté them for a couple of minutes to release their aroma and juices. Add the seasonings and stir for a minute; then stir in the stock and beans.

Bring the bean mixture to a boil, reduce the heat to medium, and simmer, stirring frequently, for 5 to 10 minutes—until the seasonings have mellowed a little and quite a bit of the liquid has evaporated. Set aside, and move on to the chicken mixture.

In a small frying pan over medium heat bring 1/4 cup chicken stock to a boil. Throw in the chicken, chili powder, and cumin, and cook for a minute or two, stirring. The seasonings should be well distributed throughout the chicken, and most of the stock should have evaporated. Set this mixture aside as well.

Next, roll and/or stretch each piece of pizza dough out gently (this may take a few tries) so that it forms a 14-inch circle (or a rectangle to go onto a cookie sheet if you don't have a pizza pan). Use a little flour to help with this if necessary.

Spray your pans lightly with cooking spray and oil them even more lightly. Place the dough on the pans.

Divide the bean mixture between the two pizzas, and use a spatula to spread it almost to the edges of the pizzas. Sprinkle the cheese on next, followed by the chicken, green chiles, and olives.

Bake the pizza until the cheese is nicely melted and the bottom of the crust turns golden brown. With my crust (from Trader Joe's) and my oven (old) this took 10 to 12 minutes.

Place the garnishes on bowls at the table so people can help themselves. (Erin put them on herself before serving the pizza; you may also do this.)

Makes 2 pizzas.