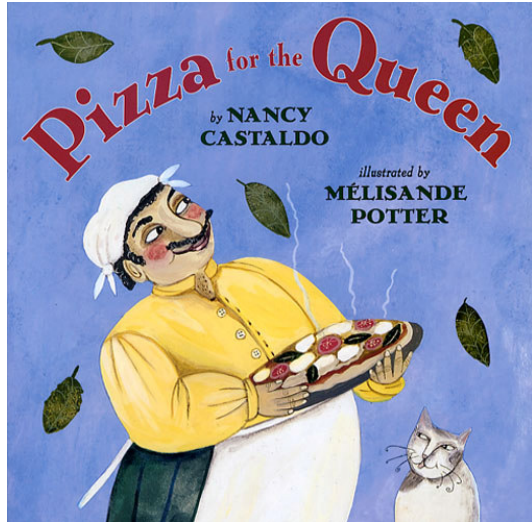


Mmmmmmm . . . the story of the first Margherita pizza is *delizioso!*



Raffaele makes the best pizza in all of Napoli. It is so good that even Queen Margherita herself has requested a taste. Raffaele scurries around town to collect the finest ingredients for his pizza, but what will he do when a sneaky cat eats his anchovies? Inspired by the colors of the Italian flag, Raffaele creates a new kind of pizza that delights not only the queen but generations of pizza lovers to come.

Nancy Castaldo is a pizza lover whose ancestors came from the Naples area of Italy. She lives with her family in upstate

New York, and her birthday is on International Pizza Day, February 9. Her website is www.nancycastaldo.com.

Mélisande Potter has been a ballet dancer and pianist, and established her own tiny theater company with her family. An avid traveler, she has illustrated children's books set around the world. She divides her time among New York, Jamaica, and Europe.

Pizza for the Queen

by Nancy Castaldo

illustrated in full color by Mélisande Potter

Ages 4-8 ♦ 32 pages ♦ Hardcover

10 x 10 ♦ \$16.95 ♦ Pub date: September 2005

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An Interview with Nancy Castaldo

What are your favorite pizza toppings?

I love pretty much anything on my pizza, but if I had to pick some favorites, I'd say spinach, anchovies, ricotta, and pepperoni. Of course, that's not all on the same pizza!



Where have you been in Italy, and which place had the best pizza?

I have been to many places in Italy—Florence, Rome, Bologna, Naples, Assisi, Sicily, and many little towns, including along the Amalfi Coast and Capri. It's hard to pick the best pizza. Some of the more memorable include eating a Margherita pizza in Assisi in a restaurant that still had the original Roman floor, a quattro formaggio (four cheese) pizza on the beach in Positano, and grabbing a slice in Ferrara and enjoying it in the piazza while people watching.

What is different about pizza in America versus pizza in Italy?

The pizza in America is getting closer to the pizza in Italy when it is baked in wood-fired ovens. The pizza in Italy is made with local ingredients and the ovens bake the crust a little differently. You won't find a deep-dish or very thick pizza in Italy.

Your birthday is February 9, International Pizza Day. Do you have a pizza cake for your birthday?

No, I can't pass up chocolate cake for my birthday. That's not to say it doesn't often follow pizza.

Why did you want to tell the story of Raffaele and his pizza? Is it a true story?

It is based on the story of the first Margherita pizza and the pizza maker, Raffaele Esposito. I love sharing the stories behind things we love.



What is the best way to eat a slice of pizza?

Well, for me, picking up a slice and digging right in!

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Holiday House September 2005

Plan a Pizza Party

- 6 weeks before: Start planning to promote your event. Hang posters in your store and include the party details in your newsletter and website. Send an announcement to your best customers and be sure to include the book-ordering information.
- 4 weeks before: Decide on games, activities, and the amount of food and beverages you'll need.
- 3 weeks before: Purchase the supplies you'll need — paper plates, napkins, drinks. Check with your staff to see who is available to help.
- 1 to 2 weeks before: Draw up a schedule of activities, make samples of the planned crafts, and make photocopies of the schedule of activities for your staff.
- 3 days before: Place the pizza order, if possible, and put the cash needed in an envelope.
- 1 to 2 days before: Start decorating the store.

Have a great time!

Pizza Margherita

Pizza Dough

What you will need:

- 1 package yeast
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup warm water
- 2 cups flour or more
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup olive oil



- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups
- Mixing bowl
- Pastry board
- Towel
- Pizza pan
- Grown-up help

1. Dissolve the yeast and sugar in warm water.
2. Mix the flour, salt, and olive oil together in a mixing bowl.
3. Put the flour mixture on a pastry board. Create a well in the center of the flour mixture. Pour the yeast mixture into the well and begin forming the dough with your hands.
4. Knead the dough until it is smooth and can be stretched. Add more warm water if necessary. If the dough seems sticky, add a little more flour.
5. Roll the dough into a ball and cover it with a towel. Let it rest for about $\frac{1}{2}$ hours.
6. Now it is ready to be stretched into a pizza shell.

Topping

Ingredients for one pizza:

- 2 cups diced, peeled ripe tomatoes
- 1 large mozzarella di Bufala, sliced thinly
- A handful of fresh basil leaves
- Olive oil



1. Preheat oven to 500° F.
2. With well-floured hands, slap the dough onto a hard surface, such as a clean kitchen counter, to soften it.



3. Flatten the dough using your hands or a rolling pin to create the pizza shell. Be sure not to make any holes in it. Place it in a pizza pan.
4. Ask a grown-up to help dice the tomatoes and slice the mozzarella.
5. Drain the diced tomatoes and spoon them over the entire pizza shell.
6. Place thin slices of the mozzarella over the tomatoes. Drizzle some olive oil over the top.
7. Ask a grown-up to bake your pizza in the oven until the edge of the pizza shell rises and browns and the cheese is bubbly.
8. Scatter the fresh basil on top and serve.

If you need a reason to have a slice of pizza, February 9 has been declared International Pizza Day. It's also my birthday!

