

White Clam Pizza – Comfort du Jour

Topped with salty, slightly chewy littleneck clams and accented with fresh oregano, garlic and a copious amount of fluffy shredded Pecorino-Romano cheese, the white clam pizza meets every expectation for a casual meal, but with special ingredients and festive occasion flavor.

This pizza does not have a red sauce, nor mozzarella or sausage. It is an amazingly short and simple list of ingredients that amounts to spectacular flavor. Use deli-quality cheese and shred it yourself. Get the freshest littleneck clams you can find, or choose another quahog type of clam, as close to littleneck size as possible. Follow the supplier's recommendations for keeping them fresh, and the rest is easy.

As with any good pizza, the crust is crucial. If you don't already make your own dough, I hope you'll give [my recipe](#) a try, not just for this pizza but for all your pizzas. Let the dough come to room temperature before proceeding and have fun with it!

INGREDIENTS

1 ball of [N.Y. pizza dough](#) (get the recipe on my blog or use your favorite store-bought dough)
About 20 littleneck clams (fresh, in-shell)
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 Tbsp. fresh oregano leaves, chopped (or 1/2 tsp. dried oregano leaves)
2 cups finely shredded Pecorino-Romano cheese (preferably grated at home)
Extra virgin olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven and pizza stone or steel to 550° F for at least one hour.
2. Bring a medium-sized pot of water to boil over medium-high heat. You don't need a lot of water in the pot; enough to just cover the clams.
3. When water boils, carefully add clams to the pot. Boil 2 to 3 minutes, until clams pop open. Immediately drain clams into a colander and cool until shells are easy to handle.
4. Use the tip of a sturdy knife to pry the clams all the way open and remove them from the shells. Drain clam meats on a paper towel until ready to make the pizza. If you're working ahead, I'd recommend covering the clams on a plate in the fridge.
5. Shape pizza dough to a 14-inch round and place it on a floured pizza peel.
6. Spray or brush pizza dough with olive oil, then season it with salt and freshly ground pepper. Scatter a small handful of Pecorino-Romano on the dough, and then sprinkle the garlic and oregano over the entire dough.
7. Arrange the drained clams over the dough. Toss the remaining Pecorino-Romano over the entire pie, covering the clams and allowing the cheese to get right up on the edges of the dough.
8. Drizzle the pizza with extra virgin olive oil.
9. Slide the pizza onto the preheated stone or steel and bake about 6 minutes, until crust is golden brown on the edges and cheese is bubbling.