

## **CAULIFLOWER PIZZA CRUST**

*(Recipe adapted from several available versions.)*

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Photo: Love+Craft Kitchen (Unbaked crust)

When I first heard of cauliflower pizza crust, I was curious yet not convinced it would pass muster. Could riced cauliflower, herbs and cheese truly be a satisfying substitute for freshly-baked pizza dough? Turns out it is! Whenever I make this recipe, the entire pizza is devoured in no time flat.

The key to making a nicely textured crust is to remove as much moisture from the cauliflower as possible. In addition, mild fresh goat or cream cheese work very well with the egg as binders. The flavors blend and are very subtle in the crust, and the soft cheese distributes more evenly than a hard variety, providing stability.

Makes 1 - 12" pizza crust, or 2 - 3 mini-crusts

### **INGREDIENTS**

2 pounds riced cauliflower (fresh or frozen)

2 tablespoons olive oil - only required if using fresh cauliflower

1 large egg, slightly beaten

2 ounces mild fresh (soft) goat cheese or cream cheese, at room temperature

1 teaspoon dried oregano, basil or Italian seasoning blend

¼ teaspoon Kosher salt

1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a pizza pan or large cookie sheet with 1 sheet of parchment paper.

#### **If using fresh riced cauliflower -**

2. On stovetop, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large saute pan over medium to medium-low heat. Add the fresh riced cauliflower and saute until just softening, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

#### **If using frozen (blanched) riced cauliflower - skip step 2, proceed to step 3.**

3. Transfer cauliflower to a large cloth dish towel (flour sack towels work well), bring up all of the edges to secure, and squeeze the bundled cauliflower to remove the moisture. Continue to squeeze until cauliflower forms a small ball and as much moisture is removed as possible - this can take several minutes. Transferring the cauliflower to a second towel part way through the process may also be helpful.

4. Place cauliflower into a large mixing bowl. Add the beaten egg, cheese, and seasonings. Mix well until evenly combined.

5. Transfer the cauliflower mixture to the pizza pan or cookie sheet and press to form the large pizza crust or mini pizza crusts. Press evenly to about ¼ inch thick, forming and smoothing the edges.

6. Bake the crust for 30 - 35 minutes until golden brown. Using the parchment paper and a large spatula to assist, carefully turn the pizza crust over onto the baking pan - no parchment lining needed on the pan for this side - remove and discard the parchment paper. Bake for an additional 10 minutes. Remove from oven.

7. If using immediately, add sauce and desired toppings, careful not to overload. Bake pizza at 400°F for approximately 8 - 10 minutes.

If using at a later time, cool crust completely, leave the crust on the pizza pan or baking sheet and cover it all with plastic wrap. Place into the freezer for an initial freeze. After the crust is frozen completely, remove it from the pan, wrap it in parchment and plastic wrap and carefully place it back into the freezer where it will not be crushed.

**TIP:** If cardboard is available, cut a circle or oblong shape just larger than the cauliflower pizza crust for extra stability in the freezer. Place wrapped pizza crust on top of the cut cardboard shape and wrap the entire package in plastic wrap once again. Place into the freezer.

When ready to use, unwrap and place the crust on baking pan, add desired toppings and bake at 400°F for approximately 10 - 12 minutes, until heated through.



Photo: Love+Craft Kitchen