

Buffalo Chicken Pizza – Comfort du Jour

For this western New York girl, Buffalo chicken pizza is a favorite non-traditional pie, for those times when you just can't quite decide between pizza and Buffalo wings. From the authentic Frank's red hot sauce to the bleu cheese, and right down to the celery, this pie delivers. All. The. Flavors.

These pizzas move very quickly once the dough is shaped, so do yourself a favor and prep all the ingredients as much as a day ahead. You'll appreciate having more space in the kitchen, and I've recently discovered that placing cold toppings on your freshly shaped pizza dough seems to make it easier to slide the pie off the peel into the screaming hot oven.

We bake all our pizzas on a steel, which has quite literally been a game changer in our quest for the perfect slice. If you use a pizza stone or metal pan, please follow the alternate baking instructions.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 lb. lean ground chicken
- 1/2 small onion, chopped
- 1/3 cup Frank's "original" red hot sauce
- 1 Tbsp. fresh garlic, chopped
- 1 stalk celery, ribbed and sliced thin on diagonal
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped jalapeno*
- 1/2 cup shredded pepper jack cheese*
- 1/2 cup crumbled bleu cheese*
- 1/3 cup whole milk ricotta cheese
- 1 ball New York pizza dough (or store-bought, in a pinch)
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper

NOTES

For less heat, skip the jalapeno and use regular Monterey jack cheese rather than pepper jack. If you're not a fan of bleu cheese, try feta instead, to mimic the texture and saltiness without the "funk."

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat a skillet over medium heat. Add a swirl of extra virgin olive oil and cook chicken with onions until browned. Remove from heat, stir in Frank's red hot sauce and chopped garlic.

Shape pizza dough into 12- to 14-inch disk. Brush or spray with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Spread ricotta evenly over dough, keeping about 1/2 inch border on dough. Scatter chicken mixture evenly over ricotta base, then top with celery slices, jalapeno and pepper jack. Sprinkle bleu cheese crumbles over the top of the pizza and bake on steel or stone at 550° F for about 7 minutes, until crust is golden brown and cheese is bubbly.

For baking on a pizza stone, follow manufacturer's instructions regarding maximum temperature. Some stones will crack or break at higher temperatures. For baking on a pizza pan, lightly grease the pan before placing dough on it, and bake in the lower third section of your oven for a few minutes longer than recommended in the above recipe.