

Caramelized Onion Focaccia

This bread is a great one to start with if you're new to yeast baking. A quick turn in the mixer and some patience as it rises are all the skills required. Caramelizing the onions takes about half an hour, which can happen while the dough is rising.

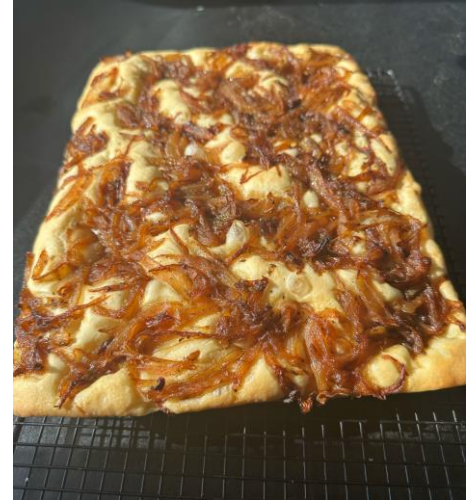
The flavor dividends on your time investment are legion.

Dough

3 tablespoons (35g) olive oil
1 1/2 cups (340g) warm water
1 1/4 teaspoons table salt
3 1/2 cups (420g) unbleached all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon instant yeast
3/4 cup (85g) grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

Topping

1/4 cup (50g) olive oil, divided
6 cups (600g) sliced onions (142g diced)
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon each: dried basil, oregano, and parsley, or
1 tablespoon Herbs de Provence



Pan prep: Spray a 9" x 13" pan or quarter sheet pan with nonstick spray. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons of olive oil.

For the dough: In a mixer fitted with a paddle, combine the ingredients in the order listed, mixing at low speed until a cohesive dough forms. Increase the speed to medium and mix for 3 minutes. Cover and let rest in the mixing bowl for 20 minutes.

After resting, mix for 15 seconds at low speed, then transfer the dough to the prepared pan, patting it out to cover as much of the surface as possible. Cover and let rise for 45 to 60 minutes.

For the topping: In a large skillet over medium heat put 2 tablespoons of olive oil, onions, and salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are collapsed and caramelize to medium brown (25 to 30 minutes). Remove from the heat and stir in the herbs.

To assemble and bake: Preheat the oven to 375°F. Uncover the dough and drizzle with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Grease your fingers and press deep indentations all over the dough. Evenly distribute the cooled onions over the top.

Bake for 28 to 32 minutes until golden brown. Remove from the oven and let sit for 5 minutes before removing from the pan to cool on a rack before slicing.