**Focaccia Bread**

Makes One Pan of Focaccia

9 cups (40 oz / 1134 g) unbleached bread flour

3 ½ teaspoons (0.8 oz / 22 g) iodized salt, or 5 teaspoons coarse kosher salt

2 ½ teaspoons (0.28 oz / 8 g) instant yeast

4 cups (32 oz / 908 g) chilled water (about 55°F or 13°C)

2 tablespoons (1 oz / 28 g) olive oil, plus more for the pan

**Method**

1. Combine the flour, salt, yeast, and water in a mixer with the paddle attachment and mix on the lowest speed for 1 minute. The dough should be coarse and wet. Let the dough rest for 5 minutes to fully hydrate the flour.
2. Drizzle the olive oil over the dough, then resume mixing on medium-low speed using the paddle attachment for 5 minutes. The dough should become smoother but will still be very soft, sticky, and wet.
3. To make 1 large focaccia, line a 12 by 16-inch sheet pan with parchment paper or a silicone mat. Oil it generously, including the sides, with about 2 tablespoons of olive oil, then transfer the dough to the pan. Drizzle another tablespoon of oil over the top of the dough, then use your fingertips to dimple the dough and spread it to cover about half of the pan. Make sure the top of the dough is coated with oil, then cover the pan (not the dough) tightly with plastic wrap and immediately place the pan in the refrigerator overnight or for up to 4 days.
4. For round focaccia, cut out a piece of parchment paper to fit inside an 8- or 9-inch round pan. Oil both the parchment and the sides of the pan with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, then transfer the dough to the pan. For an 8-inch pan, use 8 ounces (227 g) of dough; for a 9-inch pan, use 12 ounces (340 g) of dough. Drizzle 1 teaspoon of olive oil over the top of the dough, then use your fingertips to dimple the dough and spread it as far as it will allow. Don’t force the dough when it starts to spring back. Cover the pan (not the dough) tightly with plastic wrap and immediately place the pan in the refrigerator overnight or for up to 4 days.

**On baking day**

1. Remove the dough from the refrigerator about 2 1/2 hours before you plan to bake, and if you haven’t already panned it, follow the instructions above to do so, spreading it to cover a portion of the pan.
2. Warm the oven for just a few minutes, then turn it off; or, if you have a gas oven with a pilot light, it’s warm enough without any heating. Drizzle a small amount of olive oil on the surface of the dough and, beginning in the center and working toward the sides, dimple the dough with your fingertips to spread it over more of the pan. The dough will start resisting and sliding back toward the center after a minute of this; stop dimpling at that point. It should now be covering 70 to 80 percent of the pan. Cover the pan with plastic wrap and put it in the warm oven (with the heat off!). For a gas oven with a pilot light, leave the focaccia in for just 5 minutes. Otherwise, leave it in for about 8 minutes. (If you have plenty of time, you can simply let the dough rest at room temperature for 30 minutes between dimplings, which will require a total of about 4 hours prior to baking.)
3. After the focaccia has been out of the oven for 10 minutes, remove the plastic wrap, drizzle another small amount of olive oil over the dough, and dimple it again. This time it should cover about 90 percent of the pan. Cover it again and return it to the warm oven for 5 minutes in a gas oven with a pilot light or 10 to 20 minutes for any other type of oven. On the third dimpling (if not the second), the dough should evenly fill the entire pan. If it creeps in from the corners because of the oil, don’t worry; it will fill the corners as it rises. Cover the pan with plastic wrap and proof the dough in the slightly warm oven as before, removing it after 5 to 10 minutes and completing the rise at room temperature. It should be about 1 inch high in 1 to 1 1/2 hours (longer if not using the oven).
4. Preheat the oven to 500°F (260°C). (You don’t need a baking stone, but if you’d like to use one, allow 45 minutes for it to preheat.) Top the focaccia with your choice of toppings, but wait until the end of the baking time to add any cheese.
5. Place the pan in the oven. For large focaccia, lower the oven temperature to 450°F (232°C) and bake for 12 minutes. Rotate the pan and bake for another 10 to 15 minutes, until the top of the dough is golden brown. For round focaccia, keep the oven temperature at 500°F (260°C) and bake for 10 to 12 minutes. If you use moist toppings, such as fresh tomatoes or sauce, the focaccia will take longer to bake. To test for doneness, use a metal spatula to lift the edge of the focaccia so you can see the underside; it should be a mottled golden brown in spots, not white all over. If you’re topping the focaccia with cheese, add it when the focaccia appears to be done, then bake for another 2 to 4 minutes to melt the cheese.
6. When you remove the focaccia from the oven, run a pastry blade or metal spatula along the sides of the pan to loosen the focaccia, then carefully slide the focaccia, parchment and all, onto a wire rack. If any olive oil remains in the pan, pour it over the top of the focaccia. Cool for at least 10 minutes before serving.

**Topping Ideas**

**Herb Oil**  
½ cup olive oil  
4 tablespoons chopped fresh herbs (any combination of basil, parsley, rosemary, sage)  
¾ teaspoon kosher salt  
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper  
1 garlic clove, minced

**Crushed Tomato Sauce**

**Makes 4 Cups**

1 can (28 oz) crushed tomatoes

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon dried basil or 2 tablespoons minced fresh basil (optional)

1 teaspoon dried oregano or 1 tablespoon minced fresh oregano (optional)

1 teaspoon granulated garlic powder, or 5 cloves fresh garlic, minced or pressed

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar or freshly squeezed lemon juice, or a combination

1 teaspoon salt, to taste