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Who's Ever Heard Of A Seafood Pizza?

BY LYNN CARLSON

Before you know it the sky will turn to that delicious deep autumn blue. The humidity will take a powder. The temperature will slide into the economical range.

The most precious time of all in the South Brunswick Islands will have arrived.

I expect this fall will be doubly appreciated coming, as it is, in the wake of one of the hottest summers on record in the Southeast and one of the busiest in recent memory on the local beaches.

The kind of heat we've had will kill your appetite and your zeal for hot meals. At best it'll make you swear off home cooking except for foods that come off the grill or out of the refrigerator.

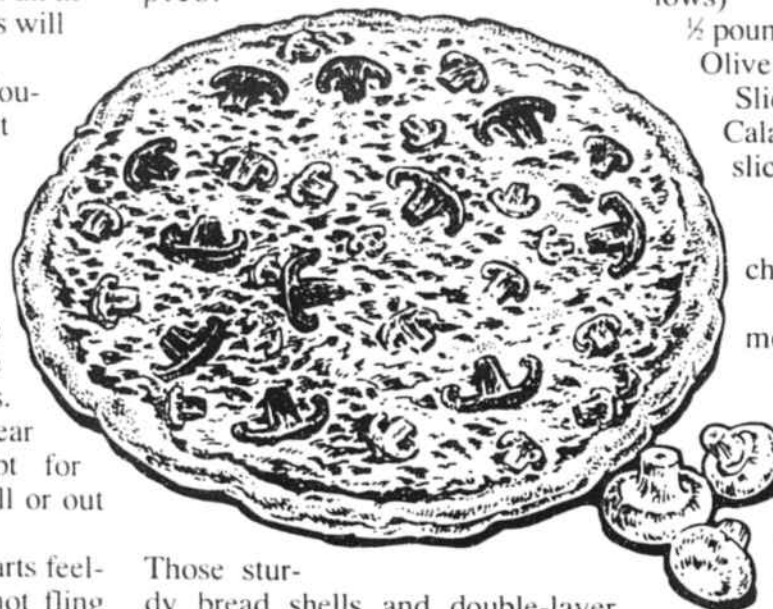
As soon as September starts feeling like September, why not fling open the windows, flick on the oven and bake yourself a good old seafood pizza.

"A WHAT??" you say? Come on, give it a try!

I began tinkering with possible seafood pizza recipes when those handy pre-baked Italian bread shells, sold under the brand name Boboli, first appeared in local grocery stores. The product must be wildly popular, because the supermarkets frequently sell out of them. As an alternative, I started experimenting with the same recipes on more readily available pita rounds (which, incidentally, are lower in fat and calories than almost any other bread). Either makes a great

seafood pizza.

Purists may chide me for not making the dough from scratch. As I matter of fact, I can indeed mix up a pretty respectable thin, chewy pizza dough, but that won't do for the heavy, wet toppings on these pies.



Those sturdy bread shells and double-layer pitas won't absorb the moisture and turn soggy like a homemade crust would.

As a side benefit, either kind of bread makes a pizza that's done 8 to 10 minutes after it enters the oven.

Compare that with the time and BTUs you have to invest in a homemade crust, which in my experience won't bake uniformly in a household electric range unless you've preheated the oven to its maximum temperature for a full hour.

So forget the dough heroics and concentrate on toppings from the sea. You'll be in and out of the kitchen in very little time with a satisfying, though admittedly un-

usual, meal to serve.

By the way, either of these recipes is great made on pitas, cut into quarters and served as a heavy hors d'oeuvre or cocktail appetizer.

GREEK-INSPIRED SHRIMP PIZZA
Greek tomato sauce (recipe follows)

- ½ pound medium shrimp, shelled
- Olive oil Pam spray
- Sliced ripe olives (the big Calamata olives you pit and slice yourself are the tastiest)
- Dried oregano
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ½ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella

- 1 Italian bread shell or 4 pita rounds

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Saute shrimp lightly in nonstick skillet sprayed with olive oil until outsides turn pink—do not cook all the way through.

Spoon amount of sauce desired onto bread shell or pitas. Arrange sauteed shrimp and sliced black olives on top. Top with feta cheese, then mozzarella.

Bake about 8 minutes or until cheese bubbles. Cool 5 minutes before slicing.

Greek Tomato Sauce

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- Fresh chopped garlic to taste
- 1 cup canned tomato puree
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
- Salt and pepper to taste

Saute onion in oil; add garlic, tomato puree and cinnamon. Simmer for 30 minutes. Use what you need on the pizza and freeze the rest for the next one.

CRABMEAT-ARTICHOKE PIZZA

- 1 cup white sauce (recipe follows) or less

- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp. dried dillweed
- ½ to 1 lb. crabmeat, picked over for shell and cartilage fragments
- 1 can artichoke hearts, drained, patted dry and sliced

- ¼-1 cup grated Romano cheese
- 1 Italian bread shell or 4 pita rounds

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Stir mustard and dillweed into white sauce. Stir enough sauce into crabmeat to coat it. Spread crab sauce over bread shells or pita rounds. Arrange artichoke hearts on top. Cover liberally with cheese. Bake 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool 5 minutes before slicing.

White Sauce

- 1 cup milk
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- Salt and pepper to taste

Whisk cold milk with cornstarch in small saucepan. Heat over medium burner; add butter. Stirring constantly, allow it to come to a boil. Simmer gently about 1 minute or until thickened. Makes 1 cup.

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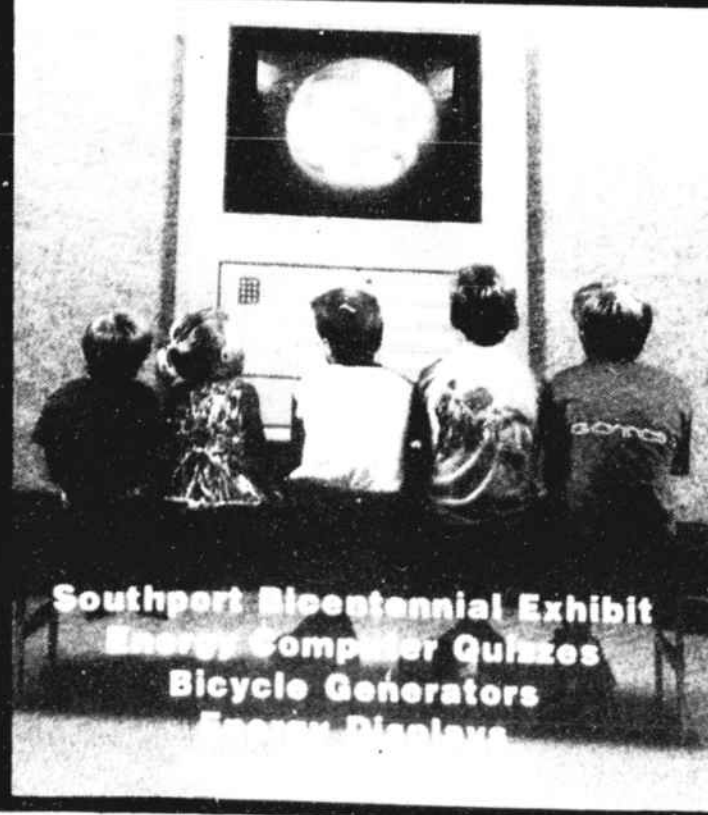
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