



now *that's*
a MOUTHFUL

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BACON AND EGG

MAKES TWO 9 BY 9-INCH PIZZAS

Bacon-and-egg pizzas are no longer viewed as an exotic concept, though it seemed they were so avant garde just a few short years ago. In fact, I think the concept is such an obvious pizza winner that it's no longer a matter of "wait, what?" but one of learning how to execute it to perfection. Some of the more adventurous pizzerias, instead of making it with bacon, use cubes of guanciale, a wonderful cured and spiced pork jowl delicacy that cooks to such fatty crispness as to induce rapturous tears. So I have no problem if you want to swap that in here (or you can also use cubes of pancetta, which is essentially bacon without the smoke). However, bacon is never shabby, so the following version makes a perfect BETA pizza (bacon, egg, tomato, and arugula). We'll revisit guanciale in another pizza on page 146 (*not included*).

Now for some math. The number of eggs per pizza will be determined by the size of the pan and personal taste. Small personal pizzas (6 by 6 inches) need only 1 egg, while some pans (9 by 9 inches) can handle up to two, or even 4 eggs for large rectangular pans, one in each quadrant.

**Any Master Dough
(pages 27–35
[See White Flour
Dough Recipe](#))**

**1 pound slab
bacon, cut into 1/2-
inch cubes, or
thick-cut sliced
bacon, cut into 1/2-
inch batons**

**1 pound brick,
Muenster, or
mozzarella-
Cheddar blend,
cut into 1/4-inch
cubes (see page
9, *not included*)**

**6 Roma
tomatoes, cut
into 1/2-inch
cubes**

**2 cups baby arugula
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons
balsamic vinegar
4 large eggs
Salt and freshly
ground pepper**

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Five hours before baking the pizza, begin panning and dimpling the dough, at 20-minute intervals, [as shown on page 13](#). After three to four rounds of dimpling and resting, the dough will have relaxed enough to cover the whole pan. At this point, top the dough with half of the cheese cubes and press them into the dough ([see page 15](#)). Then allow 4 hours for the final rise. The dough will bubble up around the cheese and rise significantly in the pan.

While the dough is rising, cook the bacon cubes in a large frying pan over medium-high heat, stirring until the pieces begin to render their fat and just begin browning. If using sliced bacon, bake it at 375°F (350°F for convection) on a sheet pan until lightly browned and crisp. Immediately remove the bacon from the heat and set it aside to cool.

While the dough is still rising, combine the cubed tomatoes, arugula, oil, and balsamic vinegar in a large bowl. Gently toss until everything is evenly coated with the oil and vinegar, and season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate until ready to assemble the pizzas.

Twenty minutes before assembling and baking the pizza, preheat the oven to 500°F (450°F for convection). Remove a small amount of the dressed arugula/tomato mixture from the bowl (about ½ cup for a large pizza or ¼ cup for a small one) and set it aside to use as garnish. Spread the remaining tomato and arugula mixture over the dough. Top with the bacon cubes and the remaining half of the cheese cubes, making sure to get plenty around the edges, where the dough meets the pan.

Bake on the middle shelf of the oven for 8 minutes. While the pizza is baking, crack the eggs into individual bowls. Remove the pan from the oven and add 1 or 2 eggs, one in each quadrant, on a large pie; if you are baking small pies, add 2 eggs on top of each. Return the pan to the oven, rotate it 180 degrees, and bake 7 to 9 minutes longer, or until the bacon cubes are crisp and golden, the cheese is fully melted, the egg whites are set but the yolks are still runny, and the dough is springy to the touch.

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Transfer the baked pizza to the stovetop or to a heatproof counter. Using an offset spatula or bench blade, carefully slide it around the edge, between the crust and the side of the pan, and then lift the pizza out of the pan and slide it onto a cutting board. Garnish with the remaining arugula mixture and let it wilt on the hot pizza for about 60 seconds. Then cut into 3- or 4-inch squares and serve.

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