



Save a Turkey. Get a Ham for Thanksgiving.



Easy Recipe Glaze Your Ham!

This holiday season, with only four ingredients, you can glaze your Ham (works great on pork chops, too).

What You Need:

- ½ Cup: Packed Brown Sugar
- 3: Tablespoons of Honey
- 1: Tablespoon Mustard (Dijon works great!)
- 1: Tablespoon of Pineapple Juice

Directions:

- 1) In a bowl, mix all 4 ingredients and whisk well until it is all blended.
- 2) Brush the glaze over Ham during the last 40 minutes of baking.

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Pizza AL FRESCO

*Outdoor ovens
promise authentic pizzas
and breads made in a
traditional way — outside,
with fire and friends*

BY JULES TORTI

PHOTOGRAPHY • DAVID WINGER

They're trending. If you're visiting Ontario's secret wine pocket in Prince Edward County, it's worth it to make a beeline for Norman Hardie's Winery in Wellington for a perfectly blistered wood-fired pizza. After yoga in the vineyard at Three Dog Winery in Picton, those in the know stretch the cheese on their wood-fired pizza with a glass of rosé. From the Bay of Quinte to Blair, pizza ovens are

dotting our local green spaces.

The Working Centre's oven in the Queens Green Community Garden in Kitchener can be rented for a fee. The price includes wood to stoke the fire and instruction from a seasoned garden member. Established in 2003 through a grant from ACE Bakery, the oven was built by volunteers and community garden members.

In Bissell Park, Elora, the Kitchen in the Park Project (KIPP) has attracted legions with its novel approach and mantra "to



LEFT: David Winger, an exchange student from Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development in Germany, built this pizza oven at Springbank Farm, part of the Rare Charitable Research Reserve. It's made out of clay, straw, brick and stone.

PHOTOGRAPHY • E. KASTNER

the academic exchange was in assessing the occurrence of emerald ash borer and the impact on local woodlots. At the confluence of the Speed and the Grand rivers, old-growth northern hardwood and Carolinian forests merge in a landscape that is a natural showcase of limestone cliffs and deciduous swamps. I was curious — how did the research intern jump from ash borer beetles to pizza making?

When I emailed Winger to learn more about his involvement in the clay pizza oven at the farm, he was just about to begin a 10-day tour with a band he manages in Germany. It seemed natural that he would have his hands in so many things, and a pizza oven was just another extension of his creativity. “The pizza oven project probably kicked off at a festival workshop in Germany a few years ago. A friend, who had already built a few ‘classical’ ovens, was playing with the idea of trying a new design and asked me along to help him out.” The two dove into the research, a byproduct of Winger’s scholastic default setting, and hammered out some alternative designs and their own concept. Over the span of four days, the friends “instructed participants to build a portable small prototype to meet the festival organizers’ criteria and we were able to dry-burn the oven just in time to serve fresh pizza at the very last day.” Winger cautions that generally a two-month drying period is necessary for clay, but the project was in a condensed festival mode.

Winger’s six-month research stint at Rare culminated in the construction of his take on a Canadian clay pizza oven. At Springbank Community Gardens on Blair Road, Rare provides 110 plots measuring three by nine metres for aspiring agriculturalists. Everything is at the ready — mulch, water, tools and intel for novices. Synthetic fertil-

izer and pesticide free, the gardens are in harmony with Rare’s eco roots. From April 15 to Oct. 31, the gardens are alive with enthusiasm and the grunt work of a multi-generational and multicultural crew. For \$30 a season and a \$20 deposit, gardeners are requested to refill the karma bank by providing two hours of volunteer service per rented plot.

With the bounty of the community gardens providing a central place to celebrate the harvest, on-site pizza ovens provide more than dinner. They become gathering spots for swapped stories beyond the toil and tight hamstrings of the garden plots. It’s easy to imagine the bartering — trading a few handsome zucchinis for watermelon, radishes and some cilantro. And the sharing of trade secrets — pizza has an undeniable unifying force.

All the big box stores have keyed in on recent consumer interest too and the designs are rolling out like iPhones with shinier features and sleek exteriors with

Scandinavian esthetic. The flashy, neon-orange igloo design of Italy’s Alfa Cupolino modular pizza oven mimics the Italian brick hearth, eliminating the need for a trip to Tuscany. Though, clocking in at nearly \$2,000, it might be cheaper to buy the airline ticket and order a few pizzas in the Tuscan hills. Some contemporary models are ready to use and hot in 20 minutes. Others are built on efficient trolleys or in a compact version suitable for camping or tailgating. There are propane pizza ovens with two cooking surfaces — a pizza stone and a separate rack for those in the crowd who don’t want pizza (who invited them anyway?).

There are even black powder-coated pizza ovens with built-in halogen cooking lights. Is anyone else reminded of those Holly Hobbie ovens of the ’70s where you could “bake” a cake with a light bulb? These ovens are two-timers though. Slide in a 40-centimetre pizza or a turkey! Or a cake, if desired. With electronic ignition and a

handy full-view front window and temperature gauge, it’s cheating, isn’t it? There’s no need to split logs, but you can add a wood chip smoker box.

Whether you’re attracted to the bells-and-whistles variety of ovens ready to load into the back of your SUV or the traditional cob ovens of clay, sand, straw and water, the historical bloodlines for outdoor ovens run deep and south. In Spain, community ovens were popular in villages where dough was often prepped at home and baked at the ovens where women gathered for camaraderie and a communal bake-off. Remains of wood-fired ovens were found in ancient Rome and northern Europe, where lords owned the ovens and heat — charging serfs to bake their bread.

To reach the magical temperature for a pizza in a traditional clay pizza oven, pack your patience. It can take three hours for the cob and masonry ovens to channel heat into the baking chamber. But, baking in *le plein air* allows for extended socializing and

bring good food to the masses” since the ribbon cutting in 2012. Their seasonal schedule offers open community bakes, acoustic cafés and pizza date nights in the park. Whether it’s booked for personal or professional events, KIPP’s goal was to provide a community amenity and, in turn, instil active citizenship.

In November 2015, David Winger, an exchange student from Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development in Germany, decided to get in on the craze.

The International Forestry Ecosystem Management student lived at Springbank Farm in Blair as part of a DAAD Rise internship, a program that offers research scholarships for both German academics abroad and internationals in Germany. Springbank Farm is an integral part of Rare Charitable Research Reserve. Established in 2001, the nonprofit organization focuses on conservation and education projects that illuminate the biodiversity of the property’s 360-plus hectares. Winger’s attraction to

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satisfaction that can only rise from kneading your own dough. Building the perfect fire and prepping a pizza outdoors is a mini camping experience, without the tent setup and soggy sleeping bags.

Building a pizza oven in Canada in November “meant a month of hardship and frozen feet,” Winger confessed. Sourcing materials was the first obstacle, as naturally found clay is a rarity, especially at Rare. Heating up icy mud for construction was another daily battle, but Winger kept his eye (and rumbling stomach) on the prize.

His two-chamber design is one that creates high energy efficiency. A fire compartment at the bottom channels smoke, hot air and flames through the back opening to the baking vault. In the baking section, an even heat from all sides should pass the stiff test of an attempted soufflé. His festival research was a lesson in durability and heat absorption. But, back to the pizza.

Donations of clay came from all angles. Local potteries, distributors and individuals with clay connections contributed to the project. Actual clay bricks from the remains of an old barn on the Rare property were also repurposed and integrated. Cambridge’s Home Depot and Rona were in on the mix, along with the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Mar-Co Clay and Hillborn Pottery Design. It takes a village!

Winger emphasized the most critical design tip: building it high enough to be at a comfortable working height. There’s even more to consider — the foundation needs to be vibration-absorbing. There has to be balance — the chimney must be high enough and directly behind the oven door to create constant air suction; otherwise, the entree will be smoked out, or possibly flaming. Which is OK if you are preparing saganaki, but not a pizza pie.

The Springbank Farm oven is a brick structure filled with a blend of sand and stone. Metal rebar supports the dome ceiling while clay and straw insulate the chamber. Remember lopsided elementary



school papier-mâché projects? Winger’s project takes a piñata to the next level. Old newspapers and sand were applied and smoothed to create a dome mould with layered flat clay stones defining the dome chamber. The mould is eventually removed and the newspaper pulled off in an anxious moment of crossed fingers that everything holds. Another clay and straw mix is used to insulate the chamber further and the final coat is a smooth layer of dry mix. Dave Smith, a Rare volunteer and resident photographer for over 10 years, designed and built the homemade cedar door and pizza peel.

Since his return home (when not on the road with the band), Winger admits to “being hooked on clay as a building material in general.” He’s continued to play with the medium and writes, “It has resulted in a couple more experimental versions, including a smoker. At the moment, I am working together with the same friend on a new invention that synthesizes existing energy-efficient burning methods (e.g. pyrolysis and a rocket stove) to further reduce resource consumption and preheating time.”

Between his studies and pizza prep, I’m not surprised to learn that Winger sees a “hay bale or hemp-insulated house with clay plastering” on his to-do list. Since his internship at Rare, he is “focusing primarily on the development and implementation of an environmental education and nature

The foundation of the pizza oven at Springbank Farm on the Rare Charitable Research Reserve is made of bricks from the remains of an old barn.

experience concept for parents and their children.” And, if that weren’t enough, he’s also building the foundation for “a small startup project for decomposable wood-based designer packaging.”

From farm to oven, Winger’s wood-fired pizza depot gives new meaning to “takeout.” For community garden members, the only takeout will be of vegetables from the soil for a rinse and chop to top the pizzas.

Winger notes the inaugural Springbank pizza toppings were “pretty standard. In my opinion, less is more, and it all comes down to the self-made dough and Italian tomato sauce (no less than six hours cooking).” For pizza pie slingers, he suggests “cheese on top and maybe some local ham served with fresh rocket greens” as unbeatable. “For seasonal reasons, I have lately started to puzzle people with a white sauce (flour-based) and an asparagus, wild herb and mushroom combination, watching skeptics turn into believers.”

From ash borer beetle research to outdoor pizza, Winger has left an indelible and edible legacy. **Danke!** 🍷

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Bacon, Pumpkin & Squash Gnocchi

Instructions Serves 4 - 6 People (2 hr prep/ 15 min total cook time)

1. Cut Squash & Pumpkin in half and scoop out seeds with pulp. Drizzle with some of the olive oil and your favorite seasoning. Place skin side up on a baking sheet with parchment paper. Add the potatoes then place in 350F oven for about 1 hour. While this is in the oven rub down the raw chicken with some oil and seasoning and place on a separate pan in oven as well.

2. On the stovetop, in a hot pan, add some of the oil then brown the chopped bacon. Once it's getting crispy, add the shallots for a few minutes until they are soft. Add garlic & sage for one minute, then add the wine. Let it cook for a couple more minutes, stirring. Once finished set aside

3. Remove squash & potato from oven. When it's easy to handle, scoop out the insides of both. Mash everything up until the lumps are gone (a potato mill/ricer works well). Combine 2 cups of mashed mixture, 1 cup flour & 2 eggs in a large bowl. Knead until dough forms a ball. If it's sticky, add more flour, but don't overwork it as the dough can become tough. Roll out pieces of dough into long strands like a snake. On a floured surface, cut strands into halfinch pieces. Then with a fork, press down on each piece, while pressing with your finger from the other side, for appearance. Place on floured sheet pan so they don't stick together.

4. Once you have a lot of gnocchi done, put in pot of boiling water for 2-3 min until they start to float. I then scoop them out with a slotted spoon and add to a hot oiled pan to sear them. Cook in smaller batches so as not to overcrowd the pan. They will not sear properly and likely stick together. Keep warm until the topping is ready.

5. Take the chicken out and start to remove the meat off the bones. It can be diced and/or shredded up. We will then add the meat to the bacon/shallot mixture. This can be heated again, adding either mashed pumpkin with some maple syrup, or just half a can of the pumpkin puree. Heat through and add a touch of water if the mixture seems too thick....you want it saucy!

6. Place the Gnocchi in shallow pasta bowls then top with the hot chicken/bacon sauce. Sprinkle with cheese and some fried sage leaves (optional). Time to enjoy this very warm and filling autumn dish!

For more information on Chef Scott Yates please visit : @chefscottcooks



Ingredients

- 1 Pkg Stemmler's Apple Cinnamon Bacon (cut into a dice)
- 1 Whole Chicken (raw or cooked)
- 3 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 1 Shallots (small dice)
- 2 Cloves Garlic (minced)
- 1 Squash (Buttercup)
- 1 Pumpkin (or small can of Pumpkin Puree if not seasonal)
- 2 Russet Potato
- Splash White Wine
- 3 Cups Flour
- 3 - 4 eggs
- 1/8 Cup Maple Syrup
- Light Salt & Pepper to Taste
- 1 tsp Chopped Fresh Sage
- Sprinkle Parmesan Cheese (optional)



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