

# Italian Broccoli Rabe Pizza

## Italian Broccoli Rabe Pizza

In Southern Italy, pizza is often simple. It starts with good dough, olive oil, and what is in season. Italian broccoli rabe pizza (**Cime di rapa**), is a common topping and is loved for its slightly bitter flavor.

This is the kind of pizza I make at home. After many years working in restaurant kitchens, I learned that Italian cooking does not need a lot of ingredients. It needs balance. For this pizza, Italian sausage adds flavor, while **cannellini beans** make it hearty without feeling heavy.

Everything is cooked together in one pan before going on the pizza. The result is a rustic, olive oil-based pizza that is simple, comforting, and very Italian.

## Things to know about this Italian Broccoli Rabe Pizza

- **Blanching the broccoli rabe matters**

A quick blanch removes excess bitterness while keeping its signature flavor intact.

- **Everything cooks in one pan**

Cooking the garlic, sausage, broccoli rabe, and cannellini beans together allows the flavors to layer naturally—no need to remove ingredients or overcomplicate the process

- **Cannellini beans are traditional, not modern**

Beans have long been used in Southern Italy to stretch meals and add body. Lightly mashing a few into the pan

creates a natural creaminess without sauce.

*(If you enjoy beans on pizza, you may also like my **Italian Escarole and Beans with Sausage** post.)*

▪ **Minimal cheese is intentional**

This pizza is olive-oil based. If you use cheese, keep it light—just enough to enhance, not dominate.

*(For dough texture that works best with oil-based toppings, use my over night **Pizza Dough Recipe***





## **Italian Broccoli Rabe Pizza**

**Serves: 2–4**

**Prep Time: 15 minutes**

**Cook Time: 12–15 minutes**

### **Ingredients**

- 1 lb. (450 g) **broccoli rabe**, trimmed

- 2–3 tbsp **olive oil**, plus more for brushing
- 3 cloves **garlic**, thinly sliced
- 1/2 tsp **red pepper flakes** (optional)
- 6 oz (170 g) **Italian sausage**, casings removed
- ½ cup **cannellini beans**, drained and rinsed
- Salt, to taste
- **12 oz (340 g) pizza dough** (homemade or store-bought – *use my [Pizza Dough Recipe] for best results*)

1–2 tbsp grated **Pecorino Romano**

## Instructions

### 1. Blanch the Broccoli Rabe

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Blanch broccoli rabe **2–3 minutes** until bright green.

Drain well and gently squeeze out excess water.

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### 2. Build the Topping

Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat.

Add garlic and red pepper flakes; sauté **30–60 seconds** until fragrant.

Add sausage directly to the pan and cook, breaking it up, until browned and cooked through (**5–6 minutes**).

Add broccoli rabe and cannellini beans directly into the same pan.

Toss and sauté **2–3 minutes**, lightly mashing a few beans so they cream into the oil and sausage fat.

Season lightly with salt. Remove from heat.

### **3. Prepare the Dough**

Preheat oven to **500°F (260°C)** with a pizza stone or baking sheet inside.

Stretch dough into a **12-inch round** on parchment paper.

Brush lightly with olive oil.

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### **4. Assemble**

Evenly distribute the broccoli rabe, sausage, and bean mixture over the dough.

Optional: finish with a **very light sprinkle of Pecorino Romano**.

Drizzle with a touch more olive oil.

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### **5. Bake**

Slide pizza onto the hot stone or pan.

Bake **12–15 minutes**, until crust is golden and crisp.

Rest 2–3 minutes before slicing.