



Pizza Ovens Buyers Guide from SabraPizza.com

There's absolutely nothing quite like the taste of the **authentic flatbread style pizzas** that you can get in a legit pizzeria, and now pizza lovers can duplicate that taste & quality at home with their own pizza oven. That's exactly why outdoor pizza ovens have **absolutely skyrocketed in popularity** the past decade!

But not all pizza ovens are created equal! You know that old saying "you get what you pay for"? Well, that saying applies as well to pizza ovens as any other consumer product on the planet today!



BUYER BEWARE!

If you purchase a cheap or generic pizza oven you should consider that a "one season use" oven – at best! This is discussed more in the **pizza oven purchase FAQs** below.

We've been cooking with every style/brand/type of pizza oven for over two decades now, and can say without hesitation that buying a generic "Made in China" pizza oven is equivalent to pulling a few hundred dollar bills out of your wallet and setting them ablaze! (This goes for the low-end "USA Made" pizza ovens too!)

If you want a pizza oven that will make pizzeria quality pizza, and will last 10+ years, there are **5 considerations you should be aware of before making a purchase:**

1. What's your budget?
2. What's your application (aka where will you place it)?
3. What's your preferred fuel type?
4. What do you intend to cook with your pizza oven?
5. Which brand of pizza oven should I buy?

Once we have gone over these considerations (and our Pizza Buyer FAQs) in detail you will be far better equipped to make an informed decision on **which pizza oven you should purchase**.

Consideration #1: What's My Budget?

Ask yourself what you're willing to spend on your new pizza oven. As you're probably guessing, the "you get what you pay for" saying is what applies here. The more you spend, the better the oven will be; and in turn, the better the pizza will be!

If you want one of the best pizza ovens made, there are only a few brands to consider (more on that later). But if you're on a tight budget, we can steer you toward the best value pizza ovens on the market today.

(Again, we've used & tested them all, so we know what to look for!)

Keep in mind that if you can't spend at least \$1,000 for your oven, you are going to be stuck buying something that won't last very long and won't make great pizza. Those ovens can be found on Walmart.com, Amazon.com, or the like. You have to spend at least \$1,000 if you want something that's going to last 10+ years and make true pizzeria quality pies - the ovens under that price point either can't reach the optimal temperature and/or the materials they're made of can't withstand that level of heat.

Consideration #2: What's your application?

This is a fancy way of saying: where do you intend to use your pizza oven? Are you looking for something portable, looking to place an oven in an outdoor patio kitchen area, or are you looking for something you can use in a restaurant or on a food truck?

Most people are looking for a pizza oven they can place on their back patio or in an outdoor kitchen setup. Most of the portables we sell are to people who have and love a pizza oven in their patio kitchen, and want to be able to make similar quality pizza on the go!

If you are like the average pizza oven shopper who is looking for a pizza oven for their back patio or outdoor kitchen area, the first consideration is where the oven will be placed:

Are you looking for a freestanding pizza oven that has its own base, or are you looking for a pizza oven you can place on a countertop or base that you already have? If you want freestanding, limit your search to pizza ovens with matching bases or legs, but if you're looking for a pizza oven to place on a countertop or existing base, make sure you consider the footprint of the ovens you consider to ensure it fits your existing space.

Note to pizza oven buyers looking for a commercial application: You can use most higher end consumer pizza ovens in a restaurant or food truck setting, but it's **absolutely vital** that you vent the smoke to the outside and have a non-combustible surface to mount the pizza oven on.

Consideration #3: What's your preferred fuel type?

Before making your pizza oven purchase, you should really know what fuel source you intend to use. Each has its PROs and CONs, so let's go over those now:

Firewood

- PROs: adds a touch of smokey taste, some can source it for free (cheap)
- CONs: quite messy, not readily available or expensive for most

Propane

- PROs: portable, easily accessible for most, minimal mess
- CONs: can be expensive to refill regularly

Natural Gas

- PROs: no refills or restocking required (if lined in), minimal mess

- CONs: not portable

Because the top pizza oven manufacturers are aware of these PROs & CONs, some have started making hybrid-capable pizza ovens that can cook with virtually any fuel source (like [these ones from ALFA](#)). Hybrid pizza ovens are kind of the best-of-all-worlds, since you can choose your fuel source every time you cook!

Consideration #4: What do you intend to cook with your pizza oven?

Did you know that you can cook virtually anything in a pizza oven? Our personal favorites - after pizza - are salmon filets, casseroles, veggies, kabobs, and steaks.

That said, only higher end pizza ovens are capable of slow cooking food, and they do so by utilizing a butterfly valve on the flue (aka chimney). For most pizza ovens that can utilize a butterfly valve, you will have to purchase that separately.

With or without a butterfly valve, you can cook most anything on a pizza oven. It just requires a lot more "babysitting" if you don't have a butterfly valve to control the temperature.

If you do intend to cook more than just pizza in your pizza oven, the biggest considerations are...

...the "mouth" opening size of the oven's door (if the items you want to cook are bigger than the mouth they won't go into the oven!)

...the size of the internal cooking floor (deducting the size of the firewood rack if cooking with wood)

If you intend to only cook pizza in your oven, this is all kind of a non-factor and you can ignore this consideration.

Consideration #5: Which brand of pizza oven should I buy?

As previously stated, over the past two decades we've cooked with and/or sold virtually every brand of pizza oven made today. Therefore, we are extremely picky about what we offer here on Sabra Pizza.

We have access to virtually every brand on the planet, and only carry the handful of brands we carry for good reason. The manufacturers we carry not only make fantastic pizza ovens, but they offer exceptional after-purchase support.

Our Overall Favorite: ALFA™ (aka Alfa Forni™)

Why? Because they are the original, and still the best - every other manufacturer is still playing catchup!

For decades ALFA™ has been handcrafting [their line of pizza ovens](#) in their family-owned factory in Anagni, Italy (right outside the birthplace of pizza!). They hold a bunch of patents, including HeatGenius™ (their proprietary insulation and heat distribution design) and they offer an ironclad 2 year warranty on their ovens.

Whether you buy their entry level oven, [the wood-burning Nano](#) for \$1,399, or their highest cost model, [the FUTURO 4 Pizze](#) for \$6,799, you get HeatGenius™ technology built in, a powder-coated solid stainless steel construction, and that 2-year warranty from ALFA™. (Even their [\\$888 portable propane model](#) has all those features!)

ALFA™ makes classic [wood-fired ovens](#) still, but these days are focusing mainly on propane & gas ovens that are [hybrid-capable](#). All of their ovens are tabletop units that can be placed on any non-combustible surface, the specific stand made for each model, or the [ALFA pizza prep table](#). Every ALFA™ model also has a cover that's made specifically for it, and they offer peels and tons of [other pizza cooking accessories](#) that work for all pizza ovens.

Our Value Pick: WPPO™ Ovens

Why? Because even though they are made in China, they are made under WPPO™'s strict supervision, and are very well engineered and solid. You won't get quite the quality or lifespan you'd get with an ALFA™, but the [WPPO™ pizza ovens](#) are legit and **will make fantastic pizza!**

WPPO™ also has a [hybrid pizza oven](#) that can cook with gas or firewood.

Much like ALFA™, all of the WPPO™ ovens have fitted covers available, and most models have optional matching base stands. WPPO™ also carries an extensive line of pizza-making accessories.

I'm now informed enough to make my pizza oven purchase... What next?

Our recommended next step would be to [join our Insider's Club!](#)

Why? Well, because it's 100% free with no obligation, and will give you access to specials that the public simply doesn't get access to. That includes occasional promos & discounts, "1st dibs" on [Clearance Center](#) additions, product release announcements, and even tips for cooking on your pizza oven.

We respect your privacy, and you can "unsubscribe" via the footer of every email we send, so you don't have to worry about spam or unsolicited emails.

Pizza Oven Buyer FAQs

- **Question:** What kind of pizza can you cook in an outdoor pizza oven?
- **Answer:** Although Italian style Neapolitan pizza is the most popular, you can literally cook any type of pizza in most outdoor pizza ovens.
- **Question:** Can I cook more than just pizza in a pizza oven?
- **Answer:** Yep, in most outdoor pizza ovens you can cook virtually anything in it that you could cook in a traditional indoor kitchen oven. That said, it's recommended that you have an [infrared thermometer](#) to regulate the internal temperature of the cooking stones on the floor, and also the item(s) you are cooking. Slow cooking is

really only viable with a butterfly valve for the chimney, which is only available for some ovens.

- **Question:** How do I know what kind of dough to use in my pizza oven?
- **Answer:** There are some really good DIY options, like [this one from WPPQ](#), or you can [buy premixed pizza dough](#) that just requires some water and proofing in a [proofing box](#) for a few hours.
- **Question:** What fuel types are available for pizza ovens?
- **Answer:** For typical patio pizza ovens, it's best to stick with firewood (or lump coal), propane, or natural gas. Those are the safest fuel sources and most commonly available in modern outdoor pizza ovens.
- **Question:** How long does it take to cook a pizza in an outdoor pizza oven?
- **Answer:** In higher end pizza ovens (like the ALFA ovens) you can cook a pizza in 90 seconds or so. In pizza ovens that can't hit that magic 600+ degree range on the oven's floor, it can take up to 10 minutes or so. Keep in mind that preheating the oven is always necessary, and the larger the oven is the longer that process typically takes.
- **Question:** What accessories will I need with my pizza oven?
- **Answer:** Vital accessories include a cover to protect your oven from the elements, a base cart or countertop that's non-combustible, and pizza cooking tools ([like these ones](#)). Not-so-vital accessories that you may want to also consider are an [ash vacuum](#) (for wood-burning ovens), cooking gloves, an [infrared thermometer](#), a hybrid kit, and a butterfly valve (for slow cooking).
- **Question:** How do you clean & maintain a pizza oven?
- **Answer:** Maintaining a pizza oven is quite similar to maintaining a grill. You will want to remove any ash & debris after each cooking session (a shop vac or ash vac is recommended). Wiping the outside with a warm wet rag and a drop of Dawn dish soap is an easy way to keep it looking sharp.