



The "torta al testo" is a very old traditional food of Perugia. It is a flat bread made from flour, water, olive oil, a pinch of salt (to make it rise, a pinch of baking of soda or beer yeast may be added). Its name comes from "testo", a flat refractory stone heated on the fire until red hot and originally used for cooking the bread. It is also known as "crescia" (in Gubbio), "torta del panaro" (baker's cake) or "pizza sotto il fuoco" (pizza under the fire) (in Terni).

It is very inexpensive and easy to make and Umbrian families often used it instead of bread. In the Gubbio area, the "crescia" was made in the traditional "panieri" (testi) containers, which were placed on the fireplaces of the country folks' homes, near the fire. This bread was prepared when major work in the fields was happening (harvesting, grape harvest, killing of the pig), in order to satiate big appetites with a food that is hard to digest, in order to save on precious bread. Today, the torta al testo is eaten on its own or filled with ham, cooked sausage, boiled vegetables, roast pork, Stracchino (soft fresh cheese) and rocket.

Ingredients: Soft wheat flour, water, salt, baking powder. Variations: As well as the above ingredients, the following may be added: vegetable oil or olive oil, Parmesan and/or Pecorino cheese, eggs, baking soda.

Preparation method: The ingredients are mixed by hand until a soft, smooth dough is obtained. This is then rolled out with a wooden rolling-pin on a wooden rolling-board, making flat, round breads, which are then pricked with a fork. These are cooked on the testo, or panaro, previously heated on a heating source. The bread should be turned over on the testo several times until it is cooked.

Storage: The product should be kept in a cool, dry place and eaten preferably the same day.