



## Lighting your Wood Fired Oven

***Below is the correct curing and lighting procedures for a Zesti Woodfired Oven. The refractory dome which is the internal element of the oven which absorbs the radiant heat from a wood fire comes to you in a green uncured state. Close attention and care must be taken when following these instructions or the warranty will be none and void on the product and at no time must it be lit differently.***

*Before lighting your Zesti Oven for the first time make sure that the floor of the oven has been swept and vacuumed to remove any residue left from the installation process.*

- 1) Light a small kindling fire in the mouth of the oven, just off the front Stainless Steel protective plate. (Not on the Stainless Steel plate)
- 2) Place a piece of dry , natural, hard wood (not from a building site) with a length of 250mm and a thickness of 80mm, length ways into the mouth of the oven front to back.
- 3) Place 3 firelighters hard up against the piece of wood in a row on one side only.
- 4) Place finer kindling with a length of 200mm with a thickness of no more than 40mm, as a roof over the firelighters from the main piece of wood to the brick hearth of the oven.
- 5) Light the firelighters and allow the kindling to take light and burn well with a cracking sound.
- 6) With your pizza peel, slowly push the kindling fire to the fourth and fifth row of bricks, starting the count from the first row of exposed bricks after the Stainless Steel protective plate. **Great care must be taken not to leave the kindling fire in the starting position for a great length of time, as this will only cause discolouration to your feature stainless steel arch and flue and can cause pre-mature cracking on the front of the refractory dome, due to uneven heating during the light-up process.**

- 7) The refractory dome when installed is green and uncured so once the kindling fire is moved to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> row of bricks no more than 1 piece of wood with the dimensions of 250mm x 100mm to be placed on the kindling fire at one time, otherwise overheating and cracking of the uncured refractory dome may occur. As each piece of wood burns and breakdowns to charcoal, only then must another piece be added. This process must continue for a period of 4 to 5 hours at this time the refractory domes internal surface will turn black from the soot of the burning wood and steam will be released from behind the front stainless steel arch and some water trails may be evident on the upstand, on which the oven is seated on. This is normal and it may take up to 2 to 3 lightings on separate occasions for the steam to eventually stop.
  
- 8) Once the oven stops steaming, you can then add another 2 pieces of wood to your fire (no more) giving you a total of 3 pieces of wood burning at one time. This will give you a fire big enough to be licking the roof of the refractory dome, but not coming forward of the stainless steel door jam on the stainless steel front arch. This fire will take a period of 40 min to take the oven up to its top temperature of 700°. When the oven reaches its top temperature patches of white will appear on the roof of the refractory dome and will slowly join up and spread to the entire internal surface of the refractory dome. Once this occurs, the oven has heat-soaked to its optimum firing temperature and will give you 8 to 9 hours of roasting temperature without a flame.
  
- 9) When the whitening of the dome as been achieved, you then must chose what you will then be cooking and below are the 2 set-up procedures for either cooking pizza, fast entrees or for the slow roasting of meats.
  - (a) **For Pizza:**

Follow the above lighting procedure of 40min to max temperature with no more than 3 pieces of wood burning at one time to achieve whitening of the dome. At this stage you will be left with a small pile of coals burning in the centre of the oven floor. When cooking pizza, these coals are moved over to the left or the right of the oven hearth and the floor of the oven is then cleaned with a semi-wet, clean mop, to remove dust and ash from the lightening procedure. A smaller piece of wood with the dimensions of 200mm x 100mm is then placed on top of the coals, which will then self-combust and will act as a pilot light to maintain top-end temperature of 700° for proper pizza baking. Only 1 piece of wood at a time is needed to maintain this temperature for as long as you wish to cook pizza when using fresh dough, transfer the pizza to a well floured (or semolina) pizza peel and then vibrate off the peel directly onto the floor of the oven to cook. Pizza generally will take 3 to 4 minutes to cook and may require at least a couple a turns.

\*Please note the roasting door provided is only to be used for roasting, NOT when there is a fire burning inside the oven as in the pizza cooking procedure. The fire and pilot light must have a steady flow of oxygen from the mouth of the oven to maintain its flame and to ensure top-end temperature. Placing the door on at this stage will only stop the air-flow (oxygen) to the fire which will then extinguish the flame and produce a smoking, smoldering oven.

**(b) Roasting Meats** Follow the above procedure to take the oven to white inside, but instead of taking the coals to one side, remove the coals altogether and extinguish them in a galvanized bin. The temperature of the oven without a fire will then drop to a safe roasting temperature within 20 minutes being around 280°. At this stage for example a leg of lamb (or any meat) is then placed on a roasting rack with a tray underneath to catch the dripping fats and the whole lamb is then slid into the mouth of the oven and watched carefully for the meat to brown and seal. Once this has been achieved the tray is then removed and the meat is then foiled over and sealed to the tray. It is then placed back in the oven for a further 2 to 3 hours, or until the meat is falling off the bone. By the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour, the roasting door may then be needed and is introduced slowly at first, as a fully closed oven hearth may spike up to 500° instantly and burn the roast.

*Happy Cooking!*

*From the Team at Zesti Woodfired Ovens*

# Please Note:

After winter or wet conditions of heavy rain you must refer back to initial lighting procedure to re-dry your Z1100 woodfired oven.

A small fire must be lit in the centre of the oven with no more than 2 pieces of wood 300mm by 100mm in dimension and must be warmed through for a period of 3 hours. This procedure will de-steam the oven and set the unit for normal use.

Failure to act on this procedure may cause the refractory dome of the oven to crack and in severe cases implode under the pressure of the built up steam.