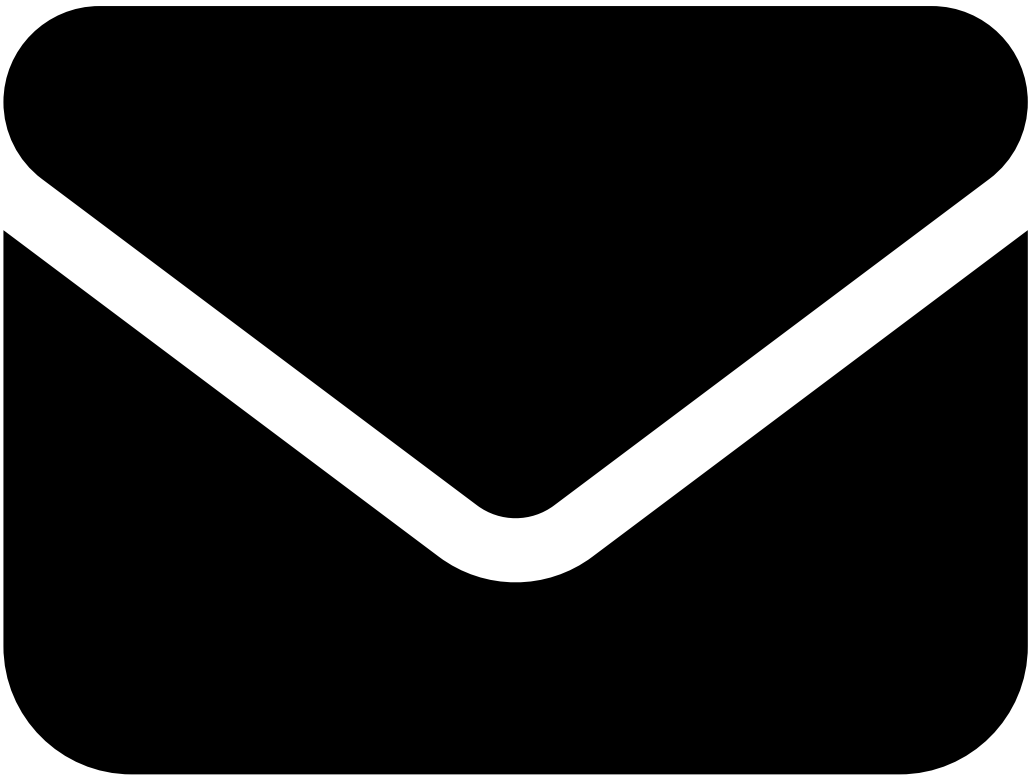
Calabrian Zucchini Fritters | Crispy Italian Recipe

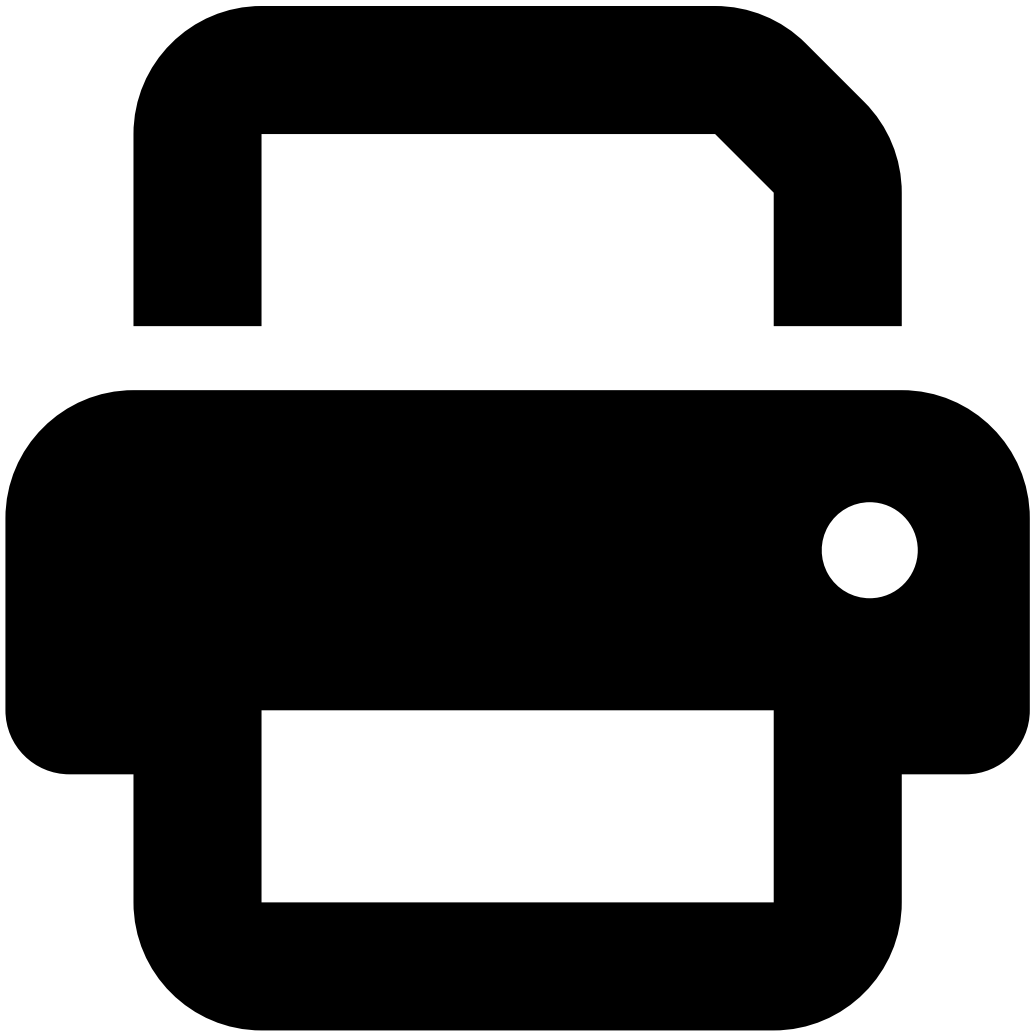
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If you’ve already made my classic Italian zucchini fritters, you’ll notice these are quite different. Instead of a thicker, pancake-style fritter, these Calabrian zucchini fritters are made with a light flour-and-water batter, creating a thinner, crispier fritter that’s very similar to Tuscan **scarpaccia**, where the zucchini remains the star of every bite.

In Southern Italy, recipes like this are a delicious way to celebrate summer zucchini. Fresh zucchini, sweet onions, and a handful of pantry staples come together to create golden, crispy fritters that are simple, rustic, and absolutely irresistible.

Things to know about this Calabrian Zucchini Fritters

Tips for the Best Zucchini Fritters

- Slice the zucchini as thinly as possible so it cooks quickly and becomes tender.
- Use cold water to help create a lighter, crispier batter.
- Don’t overcrowd the pan, or the oil temperature will drop.
- Fry in batches for the crispiest results.
- **The Best Oil for Frying Zucchini Fritters:** For the crispiest results, use a neutral oil with a high smoke point, such as peanut, canola, or a light olive oil. These oils allow the delicate flavors of the zucchini and onion to shine while creating a light, golden, crispy exterior.
- Serve immediately while they’re hot and crunchy.

Variations

- Add chopped fresh parsley or basil for extra freshness.
- Mix in a little grated Pecorino Romano for a richer, saltier flavor.
- Add a pinch of crushed red pepper flakes for a little Calabrian heat.
- Sprinkle with flaky sea salt right before serving.

Storage

These fritters are best enjoyed fresh, but leftovers can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Reheat in a 375°F oven or air fryer for 5–7 minutes until crisp again.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do traditional Calabrian zucchini fritters contain eggs?

Most traditional Calabrian recipes do not. A simple flour-and-water batter creates a wonderfully light and crispy fritter.

Can I make these ahead of time?

They’re best served immediately, but you can reheat leftovers in the oven or air fryer to restore their crispness.

Can I use yellow squash?

Yes. Yellow summer squash works just as well and can be substituted for all or part of the zucchini.

Do I need to salt the zucchini first?

Not for this recipe. Thinly sliced zucchini cooks quickly, and the light batter helps keep the fritters crisp without the extra step.

More Italian Zucchini Recipes to Try

If you loved these crispy Calabrian zucchini fritters, don’t stop here! Summer zucchini is one of the most versatile ingredients in Italian cooking, and there are so many delicious ways to enjoy it.

Be sure to try my **Italian Marinated Fried Zucchini (Zucchine alla Scapece)** for a classic Southern Italian side dish, an Italian classic fried **Zucchini flowers** when you’re craving

something crispy and **Vegetarian Zucchini Roll-Ups** for a lighter, cheese-filled dinner that’s perfect for family meals.

If you make this recipe, I’d love to hear how it turned out! Leave a □□□□□ rating and comment below—it helps others discover the recipe and lets me know what you’re cooking in your kitchen. Don’t forget to save this recipe for zucchini season and share it with friends and family who love authentic Italian cooking.

Some of the best Italian recipes aren’t complicated—they’re built on fresh ingredients and simple techniques. These crispy Calabrian zucchini fritters are proof that a few humble ingredients can create something truly memorable. Whether you’re serving them as an appetizer, alongside grilled meats, or enjoying them straight from the pan, this recipe is a delicious taste of Southern Italy that you’ll find yourself making all year long

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These **Calabrian zucchini fritters** are a rustic Southern Italian recipe made with thinly sliced zucchini, sweet onions, and a light flour-and-water batter that's fried until perfectly golden and crispy. Similar to Tuscan scarpaccia, these fritters are thin, delicate, and packed with fresh zucchini flavor, making them the perfect appetizer, side dish,

or summer snack.

- 3 cups zucchini, thinly sliced
- 1 cup onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup **cold water** (add a little more if needed)
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano (optional but traditional in many homes)
- salt and pepper to taste

1. Slice the zucchini and onion very thinly, use a mandolin or use a sharp knife
2. In a bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, pepper, and cheese (if using).
3. Gradually whisk in the cold water until you have a smooth batter that's similar to pancake batter—not too thick, not too runny.
4. Fold in the zucchini and onions until everything is evenly coated.
5. Heat about ½ inch of oil in a skillet over medium-high heat (around 350°F/175°C).
6. Drop spoonful's of the mixture into the hot oil and gently flatten them.
7. Fry for **2–3 minutes per side**, until deep golden brown and crispy.

Appetizer, Side Dish
Italian
Calabrian zucchini fritters