

Pan-Fried Eggplant Cutlets (Milanese Style)

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If you don't like eggplant, this pan-fried eggplant cutlet recipe may just change your mind. Growing up, eggplant Milanese style was one of those meals that made a regular weeknight feel special—crispy, golden slices of eggplant, lightly fried and served with just a squeeze of lemon or a pile of peppery arugula. It's a typical kind of Italian recipe, that proves you don't need a long list of ingredients to make something really satisfying. Whether you serve it as a main course with a fresh salad or as a starter with warm marinara, this classic Italian dish is always a crowd-pleaser.

Things to know about this Pan-Fried Eggplant Cutlets (Milanese Style) recipe

- **Sweating the Eggplant Matters:** Salting the eggplant slices before cooking draws out excess moisture and bitterness, which helps them fry up beautifully crisp—not soggy.
- **Breadcrumb Choice Makes a Difference:** Traditional Italian-style breadcrumbs give that classic flavor, but using panko will make the crust extra light and crunchy. You can also mix the two for the best of both worlds.

- **Don't Skip the Cheese:** Mixing grated Parmigiano-Reggiano into the breadcrumbs adds deep savory flavor and helps the coating brown nicely.
- **Shallow Frying Is Key:** You don't need a deep fryer—just a thin layer of olive oil in a skillet does the trick. Fry in batches and don't overcrowd the pan to keep everything crisp.
- **Make It a Meal or a Starter:** Serve it with a lemony arugula salad for a light main, layer it on ciabatta with mozzarella for an incredible sandwich, or top it with marinara and melted cheese for a quick eggplant parmesan twist.
- lastly if you like eggplant as much as I do try my other eggplant recipes. Italian baked stuffed eggplant or vegetarian stuffed eggplant rollatini. And eggplant is delicious with pasta try this Sicilian eggplant caponata rigatoni

Ingredients

- 2 medium eggplants
- Kosher salt (for sweating the eggplant)
- 2 large eggs
- 1½ cups breadcrumbs
- ½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 2 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
- salt and pepper to taste

- 2 cups Olive oil canola blend (for frying)

Instructions

1. Prepare the eggplant:

- Peel the eggplant in strips. then slice lengthwise into thin 1/3 -inch thick slices
- Set a colander over a bowl. Sprinkle both sides of the eggplant with kosher salt. Let sit in the colander, weighted down, for at least 30 minutes to draw out bitterness and excess moisture. Rinse and pat dry thoroughly.

2. Set up breading stations:

- In a shallow dish add the eggs and whisk slightly .
- In a second bowl, mix breadcrumbs, Parmigiano, garlic powder, oregano, and parsley

3. Bread the eggplant:

- Dip each eggplant slice first into the beaten eggs, and then in the breadcrumb mixture. Press gently to help crumbs adhere.

4. Fry:

- Heat the olive oil canola blend in a large skillet over medium heat.
- Fry eggplant slices in batches, about 3–4 minutes per side until golden and crisp. Drain on paper towels and keep warm in a low oven if needed.

5. Serve:

- Plate with lemony arugula salad and extra shaved

Parmigiano, or spoon warm marinara on the side or over top. and a drizzle of good olive oil .
ENJOY!!!!

Lemon ricotta pasta and peas

Lemon ricotta pasta and peas

Lemon Ricotta Pasta with Peas is one of my absolute favorites. This recipe is a fresh, creamy twist on the classic Italian *pasta e piselli*, I grew up with. It's a bright, creamy spin on the comforting *pasta e piselli* my mother made often when I was growing up. She would cook ditalini or broken spaghetti with sweet peas in a simple broth, That humble dish of pasta and peas was a staple in our kitchen, especially in spring when sweet peas were in season and time was short. This version keeps the simplicity I love but adds a touch of brightness with fresh lemon and a generous spoonful of ricotta cheese. It's light, comforting, and always hits the spot—perfect for busy nights when I want something quick and easy and a little indulgent.

Things to know about this Lemon ricotta pasta and peas

- **Quick and Easy:** This dish comes together in under 30 minutes, making it perfect for busy weeknights.
- **Use Fresh or Frozen Peas:** Either works beautifully—frozen peas are a great pantry staple and

stay sweet and tender.

- **Pasta Matters:** Short shapes like fusilli, orecchiette, or shells work best because they hold onto the creamy sauce.
- **Reserve That Pasta Water:** A splash of hot starchy pasta water helps melt the ricotta into a silky, cohesive sauce.
- **Lemon Brightens Everything:** Use fresh lemon juice and zest—it cuts through the richness of the ricotta and adds a fresh finish.
- **Make It Your Own:** Add fresh herbs like basil or mint, a sprinkle of grated Parmesan, or even a few chili flakes for a touch of heat.
- If you like easy warm weather pasta dishes try my vegetarian zucchini and tomato pasta or my creamy lemon parmesan zucchini orzo
- To sum it up this lemon ricotta pasta and peas is the perfect combination of easy and delicious. The addition of the ricotta elevates the entire dish. Sometimes , it's just one ingredient that transforms a simple recipe into something memorable. I hope you try it and taste the difference ricotta makes-let me know what you think in the comments. ENJOY!!!

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb. small shaped pasta
- 4 cups fresh or frozen peas
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- juice and zest from 1 lemon

- 2 cups pasta water
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
- freshly ground black pepper
- salt to taste

Instructions

1. In a pot of boiling salted water cook your pasta *al dente* reserving at least 2 cups before draining
2. While the pasta is cooking, in a large saute pan over medium heat add the olive oil, then add in the onion and garlic and cook until soft and fragrant , but not brown.
3. Add the peas and cook 4-5 minutes until the peas are cooked but not mushy. Then add in the pasta water and the ricotta. Simmer until sauce thickens (3-5 minutes).
4. Add the parmesan cheese , and freshy ground black pepper, salt according to taste,
5. Plate top with more parmesan and the freshly chopped Italian parsley. ENJOY!!!

Vegetarian zucchini and tomato pasta

Vegetarian zucchini and tomato pasta

This vegetarian zucchini and tomato pasta is one of those easy, feel-good meals I like to make when the garden (or the

market) is full of summer produce. It comes together with just a handful of simple ingredients-zucchini, sweet cherry tomatoes, garlic, and pasta- nothing fancy, just simple flavors that produce delicious results. It's the kind of dish that feels good for you fresh.

Things to know about this vegetarian zucchini and tomato pasta recipe

1. It's all about easy : This pasta dish uses a few fresh seasonal ingredients and makes them delicious. No fancy techniques, or unrecognizable ingredients you can't pronounce, just good ingredients done right.
2. Quick and easy : You can have this meal on your table in under 30 minutes, making it perfect for busy weeknight meals.
3. Naturally vegetarian and easy to customize :
4. It's meatless but still satisfying, and if you want to add a protein boost, try tossing in some grilled chicken, shrimp or white beans during the final toss with the pasta. They soak up the garlicky tomato juices and make the meal extra special for Saturday dinners with friends.
5. I hope this simple vegetarian zucchini and tomato pasta brings a little comfort in how easy it is to make . It's one of those recipes that doesn't ask much of you, but gives so much back fresh, easy, and delicious. Whether you keep it vegetarian or add your favorite protein, it's the kind of reference recipe you'll want to come to again and again. ENJOY!!
6. And please when you make this pasta dish leave me a comment below with your experience with the recipe. Snap a photo, and tag me on social media. I love seeing your creations. It's my favorite part!!

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb. short pasta
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 2 medium zucchini cut lengthwise and sliced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup my easy marinara sauce
- 1 cup vegetable stock
- 1 cup reserved pasta water
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Grated parmesan and a few basil leaves for serving

Instructions

1. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook your pasta *al dente*. Reserve about 1 cup of the pasta water, then drain.
2. While the pasta is cooking, heat the olive oil in a large skillet, over medium heat. Add the garlic and saute until soft and fragrant- don't let it brown.
3. Add the tomatoes, red pepper flakes and a pinch of salt and cook 5-6 minutes until the tomatoes are soft and blistered
4. Add the zucchini and cook until tender 4-5 minutes. Add the marinara sauce and the reserved pasta water and cook 5 minutes longer.
5. Add the drained pasta to the pan. Toss everything together until well coated and glossy. Stir in the parmesan cheese and stir to melt into the sauce
6. Serve hot with fresh basil leaves and additional parmesan cheese. ENJOY!!!

Easy homemade spinach crepes

Easy homemade spinach crepes

Looking for a quick , easy and delicious healthy meal that's perfect any time of the day ? These easy, homemade and quick spinach crepes are just what you need! Light , savory, and full of good for you spinach, these crepes come together in minutes and make a versatile base for your favorite fillings. I used them to make a lighter version of spinach manicotti- filled the crepes with a creamy ricotta and spinach filling, placed them in a baking dish with my easy marinara sauce, topped them with shredded mozzarella and baked them until the cheese was bubbly and golden.

Things to know about this Easy homemade spinach crepes recipe

These savory spinach crepes are easy to make! They take a little bit of time- you have to fry each one separately but other than that, they're really easy to make. Crepes are nothing more than super thin pancakes, deliciously neutral in taste. It's the fillings that make them savory or sweet.

If you want to make crepes into a lunch or dinner, what I do is make a rich ricotta and spinach filling and use these spinach crepes instead of store-bought pasta tubes to make manicotti. I layer them in a baking dish with my easy marinara

sauce and bake until bubbly and golden. It's a lighter, healthier version on the classic- delicious and perfect to make ahead of time , and bake when you're ready to serve.

These easy homemade spinach crepes are a healthy alternative, they're delicious and a versatile staple you'll make over and over again. Whether you're making them for a quick lunch, using them for manicotti, or filling them with whatever you have on hand, you're going to love them!!! Try them with my easy marinara sauce and your favorite savory filling for a delicious easy dinner everyone will love. And if your looking for a more classic option, check out my plain crepes how to make homemade crepes -prefect for sweet or savory fillings. And what I used to make my delicious Italian crepe Manicotti with bechamel

Let me know how you used them- I'd love to hear what fillings you came up with, snap a picture and tag me on social media, I love to see your creations . It's my favorite part!!

Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh spinach
- 1 1/2 cups of flour
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 2 Tbsp. of butter
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Prepare the spinach by placing it a dry saute pan and cook until wilted (2-3 minutes) let cool, squeeze out as much liquid as possible.
2. In a blender or food processer combine the spinach, eggs, milk and salt , blend until smooth.
3. Add the flour and pulse until combined. Don't over mix.

The consistency should be smooth and thin , similar to heavy cream. It should coat the back of a spoon. Then set the batter in the fridge to rest for at least 1 hour or overnight.

4. Heat an 8 inch non-stick skillet over medium high heat. Grease with a small amount of batter. Pour a small amount of batter(about 2 Tbsp.) into the pan and swirl to coat evenly. Cook each crepe 1-2 minutes per side. Greasing the pan with butter lightly before each crepe.
5. To store spinach crepes, allow them to cool completely before stacking and covering them tightly with plastic wrap or placing them in an airtight container. Keep them in the fridge for 2-3 days. For freezing separate each cooled crepe with parchment paper, stack and wrap tightly with plastic wrap or place in a freezer safe container. They will last in the freezer up to three months.
6. To reheat the frozen spinach crepes, thaw the crepes in the fridge, then warm them up in a skillet or microwave until heated through.
7. Second,
8. And so on

Italian crepe manicotti with Bechamel

Italian crepe manicotti with

Bechamel

These Italian crepe manicotti with bechamel sauce are made with homemade crepes, filled with a ricotta and spinach filling before being laid on a bed of marinara sauce. Then they are topped with a creamy bechamel sauce and freshly grated mozzarella before being baked to a golden deliciousness.

The crepe recipe is the one I always use they're soft, light and so easy to work with . Not to mention how easy they are to make. Of course you can use store-bought manicotti shells in this recipe. but why would you when homemade crepes tastes so good and are so easy to make.

Tips for this Italian crepe manicotti with bechamel recipe

A few tips: Let your crepes cool before filling so they don't tear. Don't overstuff – just a few spoonful of filling is perfect. A little bechamel goes a long way, just enough to coat the manicotti and bubble up around the edges. You can assemble the whole dish a day ahead and keep it covered in the fridge-just bring it to room temp before baking. It also freezes beautifully, so it's great for making ahead when you're feeding a crowd or the holidays.

If you've never made manicotti with crepes , give it a try and tag me when you do. I love to see your creations. And trust me, once you taste these Italian crepe manicotti you'll never reach for the store-bought shells. ENJOY!!!!

Ingredients

12 crepes from my How to make homemade crepes

3 cups your favorite marinara or my easy marinara sauce

FOR THE FILLING:

2 cups ricotta cheese

2 cups shredded mozzarella divided 1 cup for the filling and 1 cup to top the manicotti before baking.

1/2 cup parmesan cheese

1 egg

1 cup blanched spinach or Swiss chard, squeezed dry and chopped

salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

In a bowl mix together ricotta, parmesan cheese, 1 cup of the shredded mozzarellas, egg, spinach or chard. Season with salt and pepper to taste set aside

Ingredients: FOR the EASY BECHAMEL SAUCE

- 1/2 stick of butter
- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 1/2 cups of whole milk
- pinch of nutmeg
- salt and pepper to taste
- **INSTRUCTIONS**
- Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium high heat
- Whisk in the flour and cook 1-2 minutes stirring . Gradually whisk in the milk a little at a time , stirring continually. Cook 5-6 minutes until the bechamel sauce is smooth and thickened. Season with salt and nutmeg.
- Assemble the crepes : Preheat your oven to 375-degrees.
- Place 1-2 generous Tablespoon of the ricotta, spinach

filling in the center from end to end of the manicotti. Roll them up like a jelly roll. Repeat with remaining crepes.

- In an oven proof lasagna pan add the 3 cups of my easy marinara sauce. Place the filled manicotti on top of the red sauce, top with the béchamel sauce. Add the remaining shredded mozzarella and bake covered for 30-35 minutes . Remove the cover the last 15 minutes. ENJOY!!!!

Italian spinach pie Torta Pasqualina

Italian spinach pie Torta Pasqualina

This delicious Italian spinach pie torta Pasqualina is made with pastry dough, spinach, or other greens like swiss chard or artichokes, ricotta cheese and eggs. Traditionally, torta Pasqualina was made with Swiss chard. This leafy green was abundant in Italy during the spring and symbolized the season's renewal.

Over time , as the dish made it's way into Italian- American kitchens, the recipe evolved. spinach became a popular substitute- it's easier to find, milder in flavor, and cooks down perfectly into the creamy filling. Today , both greens are widely used, and many home cooks use what's seasonal or convenient. You can mix swiss chard and spinach for the best of both greens. Despite the changes the basis of torta

Pasqualina remains the same, a flaky pie filled with greens, ricotta and those signature whole eggs inside, symbolizing life and a celebration of renewal.

Make Italian spinach pie Torta Pasqualina easy

To make this classic Italian spinach pie more approachable for busy or beginner cooks, you can (like I did) use store-bought pie crust or puff pastry. The original version used an olive oil dough and had 33 layers of dough, symbolizing the 33 years of Christ's life. In today's home kitchens, you can still honor the spirit of the tradition without all the layers.

Simply roll out the a refrigerated pie crust into a pie pan or spring form pan and press it gently to fit. Add your creamy filling, then crack in your whole eggs, just like the traditional method. You can choose how many eggs to add based on the size of your pie and your preference- some use two , others like me go for four or five. Top with the second crust, crimp the edges and bake until golden. Using ready-made crust gives you a buttery, flaky texture with minimal fuss- perfect for Easter brunch or weekday prep.

Whether you're honoring a family tradition or starting a new one, this Italian spinach and ricotta pie brings a slice of Italy to your table. And with the help of a store-bought crust, you can enjoy all the flavors of Torta Pasqualina- without spending all day in the kitchen. Simple, delicious and full of history, it's a recipe that brings me back to my childhood. ENJOY!!!

If you like traditional Italian Holiday recipes try my rosemary garlic seared lambchops or Italian Easter rice pie or Italian boneless leg of lamb roast

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 1/2 lbs. fresh spinach or swiss chard
- 2 cups ricotta
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- pinch of nutmeg
- 2 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
- 7 eggs 3 mixed into the filling and 4 or more cracked whole into the pie
- 2 pie crust store bought
- egg wash for brushing the crust
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Sauté the onion and garlic in the 2 Tbsp. of olive oil until soft and translucent, then add the spinach and cook for just a few minutes until wilted. Let cool slightly. Then use your hands to squeeze out as much of the liquid as possible and chop.
2. In a bowl, mix the add three of the eggs and whisk slightly, add in the ricotta, parmesan, spinach, parsley, nutmeg, salt and pepper to taste
3. Line a lightly greased pie dish or 8 inch spring form pan with one of the pie crust, fill with the spinach mixture.
4. Make 4-5 small indentations in the filling using the back of a spoon and crack one egg into each one- don't stir. These will bake whole inside the pie
5. Cover with second crust, seal the edges, and cut a few small slits on the top. brush with egg wash .
6. , Bake in a 375 degree preheated oven for 45-55 minutes, or until golden brown and the filling is set

7. Let cool slightly before slicing. ENJOY!!!

Parmesan asparagus with Blistered tomatoes

Parmesan asparagus with blistered tomatoes

This Asparagus topped with grated parmesan and blistered tomatoes is a stovetop side dish that is easy to make. It's a favorite side dish in our house, especially during asparagus season. Asparagus have a short growing season, and I try to use it in different recipes when it's in season. Funny, I didn't even like asparagus growing up- but somewhere along the way , my taste buds matured. I use them in risotto, mixed in pasta dishes and frittata. In this recipe the tomatoes are blistered on the stovetop with garlic , then removed and in the same pan the asparagus are steamed tender, grated parmesan goes right over the warm asparagus, then topped with the blistered tomatoes. Then a little more freshly grated parmesan cheese over it all. It's a perfect side dish for any spring or summer meal.

Things to know about this Parmesan asparagus with

blistered tomatoes recipe

Look for asparagus stalks that are around the size of your pinky finger for the best results. Skinny asparagus stalks tend to become stringy after cooking and larger ones may require more time to cook. Use ripe cherry or grape tomatoes. Look for ones that are plump and bright in color- we don't want wrinkled or dull tomatoes they don't blister as nicely or taste as fresh.

Don't overcook the asparagus. You want them to be tender but still have a bite. It only needs a few minutes in the pan . especially if you are using the thinner asparagus.

Grate the parmesan fresh . Pre-shredded cheese won't melt or taste the same. Freshly grated parmesan makes a big difference in flavor.

This Parmesan asparagus with blistered tomatoes is best served warm or at room temperature. That said leftovers are great on top of toasted bread , for a delicious bruschetta or tossed into pasta.

This asparagus recipe is quick , fresh and full of flavor – perfect for busy weeknights or spring time gatherings. ENJOY!!!

If you like asparagus as much as I do check , be sure to check out some of my other favorite asparagus recipes. Leeks, peas and asparagus risotto or asparagus prosciutto ricotta tart or asparagus and rice soup

Ingredients

- 1 bunch fresh asparagus trimmed
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic

- 1/3 cup white wine
- 1/2 cup vegetable stock
- 1 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
- fresh basil leaves
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Prep the asparagus by trimming off the woody ends
2. In a medium saute pan over medium high heat in 2 tbsp. olive oil saute the garlic until soft and translucent. Add the tomatoes and cook until blistered, remove. In the same pan add the remaining olive oil. Then add the asparagus, white wine. and the vegetable stock , steam for 7-10 minutes or until the asparagus are cooked but still crisp tender and the liquid has been absorbed.
3. Top the asparagus with the parmesan cheese. Place the tomato mixture on top of the parmesan, add more cheese on top of the tomatoes, cover and cook just until the cheese melts and the tomatoes are heated through.
4. Top with fresh basil. ENJOY!!!

**Braised Italian artichokes
alla Romana**

Braised Italian artichokes

alla Romana

Braised Italian artichokes alla Romana are as authentic as it gets. Stuffed with breadcrumbs, cheese and parsley they're a family favorite. My mother would make them from the artichokes she grew in our garden. Sometimes she stuffed them and sometimes she would braise them with the fava beans she grew.

This artichoke recipe is typical of Italian cooking , where simple, seasonal, ingredients come together with delicious results. You don't have to grow your own artichokes to make this artichoke recipe- just pick up some fresh ones from your grocery store or local farmers market.

Tips for success when making braised Italian artichokes alla Romana

For this braised artichoke alla Romana recipe, the best artichokes to use are the smaller , more tender ones often called " baby artichokes " or Italian globe if you can find them. Look for ones that feel firm and heavy for their size, with tightly packed leaves and no browning or dryness on the tips.

When it comes to cleaning them , don't be intimidated- it just takes a little patience. Start by snapping off the tough outer leaves near the base until you reach the softer, pale green ones. Trim the top inch or so off the artichoke using a sharp knife, and a vegetable peeler to shave the tough outer layer from the stem. Then , with a spoon scoop out the fuzzy choke in the center if it's developed (smaller ones may not have much) . Rub the cut parts with a sliced lemon right away to keep them from browning. Then drop them in the bowl of lemon water while you clean the rest.

Once the artichokes are cleaned and stuffed, they are placed in the pan upside down with the stem up-so the filling stays in place. Nestle them tightly, then leave them alone. This is important: once they're in the pan, don't move them around. Let them slowly braise in the seasoned liquid until tender.

It's a bit of a labor of love, but once they're stuffed and gently braised they become melt in your mouth delicious. If you've never made braised Italian artichokes alla Romana, this is your sign to try this recipe. Trust me- once you taste them, you'll be making them often. Let me know if you do-I'd love to hear how they turned out. THANKS!!! These stuffed artichokes pair deliciously with my ROSEMARY GARLIC SEARED LAMBCHOPS for a delicious restaurant-quality meal. Or along side my perfectly wine reduction filet mignon

Ingredients

- 3-4 medium size globe artichokes
- 1 lemon
- 2 thinly sliced garlic cloves
- 1/2 cup good quality extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 cup chicken stock
- FOR THE FILLING
- 2 cups breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan
- 1 Tbsp. finely minced garlic
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Fill a large bowl with water and the juice from 1 lemon.
2. Trim the stems, leaving about 1 inch. Peel the stems with a paring knife. Remove the tough outer leaves until you get to the pale green/yellow tender ones.

3. Slice off the tough top third of the artichokes.
4. Gently open the center and remove the tough choke using a spoon(if present)
5. Use the sliced lemon and rub each artichoke.
6. Place the cleaned artichokes in the lemon water to prevent browning while making the filling.
7. MAKE THE FILLING: Mix together the breadcrumbs, garlic, parmesan cheese, parsley and 1-2 Tablespoons of olive oil. Mix until well combined.
8. Remove the artichokes from the water, pat dry . Place 2 Tablespoons of the filling into the center of each artichoke.
9. Place the olive oil in a large pot large add the garlic and cook for 1 -2 minutes to infuse the oil. Don't allow the garlic to brown. Then add the wine and chicken stock. Place the artichokes in the pot stem up and filling side down. (they should fit snugly) and the liquid should come about 1/3 of the way up. If the stems are too tall to allow for the pot to be covered just cut the stems shorter and put them in the pot.
10. Cover and simmer over low heat for 30-40 minutes or until tender. Serve warm or at room temperature with some of the braising liquid served on top. ENJOY!!!!

creamy lemon parmesan
zucchini orzo

Creamy Lemon parmesan zucchini orzo

If your looking for a quick and easy weeknight dinner that's full of fresh flavors, this creamy lemon parmesan zucchini orzo is just what you need. Made entirely in one pan, it's a fuss-free dish that's perfect for busy worknights or when your craving something comforting without the cleanup. the orzo soaks up a velvety lemon parmesan sauce, and the zucchini adds a fresh heathy touch.

Serve it as a light vegetarian main , (if you use vegetable stock) or pair it with my rosemary garlic seared lambchops for a complete restaurant quality meal. Or with my Quick And EASY Chicken Francese for a spring time complete meal everyone will love. Also a delicious addition to grilled chicken, shrimp or fish for an easy elegant meal. It's creamy texture and bright citrus flavor also make it a delicious side dish for gatherings, adding color and flavor to your table. Whether served as a main dish or a side, it's guaranteed to keep them coming back for more.

Switch up this creamy lemon parmesan zucchini orzo

What to switch things up? Try adding grilled chicken, shrimp or seared scallops for a flavor boost. For extra veggies, toss in fresh spinach, cherry tomatoes or peas. If you prefer a little heat, a pinch of red pepper flakes will add a spicy kick. You can even swap out the zucchini for asparagus, broccoli, or whatever is in season. The possibilities are endless, making this one -pan creamy lemon parmesan zucchini orzo your go-to for easy , adaptable meals. With just one pan and minimal effort, you can have a meal that feels special yet easy enough for any day of the week. This orzo recipe is a

perfect side dish too along side my rosemary garlic seared lambchops for a complete restaurant quality meal. Or with my Quick And EASY Chicken Francese for a spring time complete meal everyone will love. Give it a try and let me know in the comments what variation you tried and tag me on social media, I love seeing your creations and it helps others. THANKS!!!!

Ingredients

- 4 cups orzo
- 2 medium zucchini cleaned and cut into dice
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1 cup chopped red or yellow onion
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 cup white wine
- 2 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 cup cream
- 1 cup grated parmesan cheese
- juice from 1 lemon
- 2 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley

Instructions

1. In a large saute pan over medium high heat in the olive oil and butter saute the onion and garlic until soft and translucent
2. Add the orzo to the pan and cook for a few minutes to toast. (2-3 minutes) then deglaze the pan with the wine. After the wine has been absorbed add the stock and cream cook until sauce begins to thicken (about 5 minutes) add in the zucchini and parmesan cheese and cook 5 minutes longer.
3. Finish with a squeeze of lemon juice and the Italian parsley. ENJOY!!!!

Sicilian Eggplant caponata rigatoni

Sicilian eggplant caponata rigatoni

Growing up, my mother would make eggplant caponata every summer using farm-fresh produce straight from our garden. The glossy purple eggplant, juicy tomatoes, and fragrant basil were transformed into a vibrant delicious caponata- a sweet tangy Italian relish. While caponata is traditionally served as a side dish or antipasto, I love tossing it with rigatoni for a hearty and satisfying pasta meal. Every bite is full of bold flavors of eggplant, olives, and capers , all simmer together in a rich tomato sauce. It's a delicious taste of summer and perfect way to cook with seasonal ingredients.

Delicious variations for Sicilian eggplant caponata rigatoni

1. **Meaty caponata Rigatoni:** Add crumbled Italian sausage or ground beef for a heathier twist. Brown the meat along with the onions and garlic before adding the tomatoes and eggplant.
2. **Seafood Caponata Rigatoni:** For a coastal Italian touch, add sauteed shrimp or chunks of white fish like cod or halibut. These seafood compliments the briny capers and olives.
3. **Creamy Caponata Rigatoni:** For a luxurious twist, stir

in a cup of ricotta cheese and 1/2 cup of heavy cream just before serving. This creates a velvety sauce that pairs beautifully with the bold flavors of the caponata.

4. Pasta Swap caponata: While rigatoni is perfect for holding on to the caponata sauce, you can easily swap it for other pasta shapes. Try penne, orecchiette, or even spaghetti for a different texture.

Sicilian eggplant caponata rigatoni is a celebration of bold flavors and simple ingredients, bringing a taste of Italy to your table. Whether you stick to the classic version or try one of the delicious variations, this dish is sure to become a family favorite. Give it a try and let me know in the comments how you made it your own!!! Share your creations and tag me- I'd love to see your take on this Sicilian – inspired pasta. ENJOY!!!!

Ingredients

- 12 Oz. rigatoni Pasta
- 1 medium eggplant cut into medium dice
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 4 cups chopped tomatoes
- 3 cup my easy marinara sauce
- 1 cup pasta water
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 2 Tbsp. capers
- 1 cup pitted and sliced green olives
- 1/2 cup pine nuts
- 1/2 cup torn basil leaves
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese for serving

Instructions

1. In boiling salted water cook your pasta al dente
2. In a large saute pan over medium high heat in the olive oil saute the onion and garlic until soft and translucent
3. Add the tomatoes and eggplant and cook until the tomatoes burst and the eggplant is tender.

mix the sugar with the vinegar and add to the eggplant mixture along with the capers, olives. pine nuts and marinara sauce let it simmer for 20-25 minutes.

1. Toss the rigatoni in this delicious vegetarian eggplant , top with grated parmesan and shredded basil. ENJOY!!!!