

Creamy Butternut Squash Risotto with Arborio

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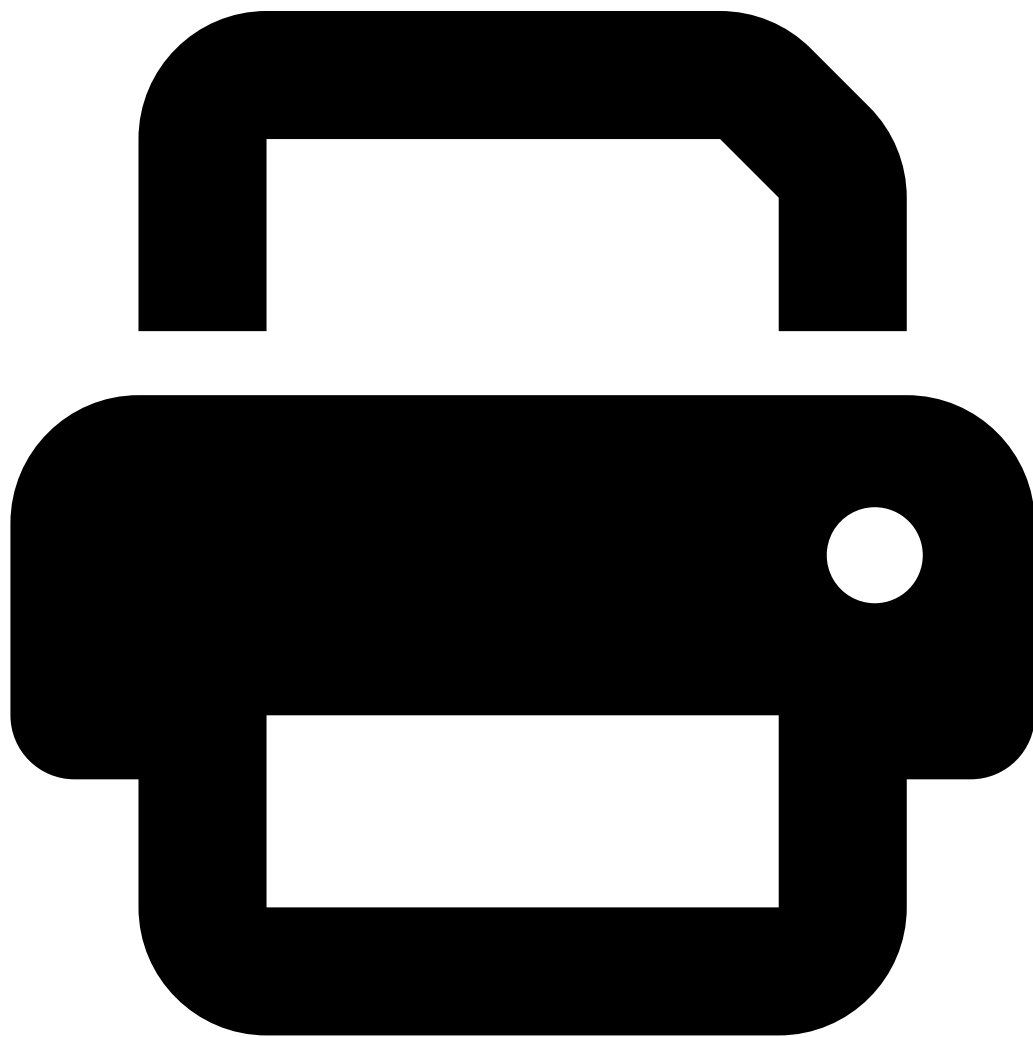
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It's no surprise most Italian restaurants have risotto on their menu, it seems too complicated for the home cook. Am here to tell you it's not complicated at all. This creamy butternut squash risotto with arborio was a restaurant menu favorite, it's easy to make, uses few ingredients and it's delicious.

Risotto is a classic Northern Italian rice dish slowly cooked in broth until it becomes rich and creamy. The broth can be made from meat, fish, or vegetables—I used chicken broth, but if you're vegetarian, vegetable stock works just as well.

Creamy Butternut Squash Risotto with Arborio



- 2 cups Italian short grain rice
 - 1 small butternut squash (peeled seeded and cubed)
 - 2 Tbsp. olive oil + 2 tablespoons butter
 - 1/2 cup minced shallots
 - 1 Tablespoons minced garlic
 - 2 cups chopped spinach
 - 4 cups chicken stock
 - 1 cup white wine
 - 1 cup crumbled gorgonzola cheese
 - 1 cup grated parmesan
 - 2 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley
 - 1/2 cup pine nuts
 - salt and pepper to taste
1. Peel and cut butternut squash into cubes drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper roast in a 375 degree oven for 30 minutes
 2. Mean while heat chicken stock keep warm, in a deep saute pan heat the butter and olive oil, add onion and garlic, saute until translucent,
 3. Add the rice cook until golden, salt and pepper to taste, add hot chicken stock slowly and a little at a time waiting until the stock is absorbed before adding more while stirring continuously, Continue adding the broth until all is used
 4. Cook until risotto is firm to the bite cooked about 20 minutes. Add parmesan cheese, roasted butternut squash,
 5. Add the gorgonzola and more broth if the sauce is to thick. Top with Italian parsley, more gorgonzola and

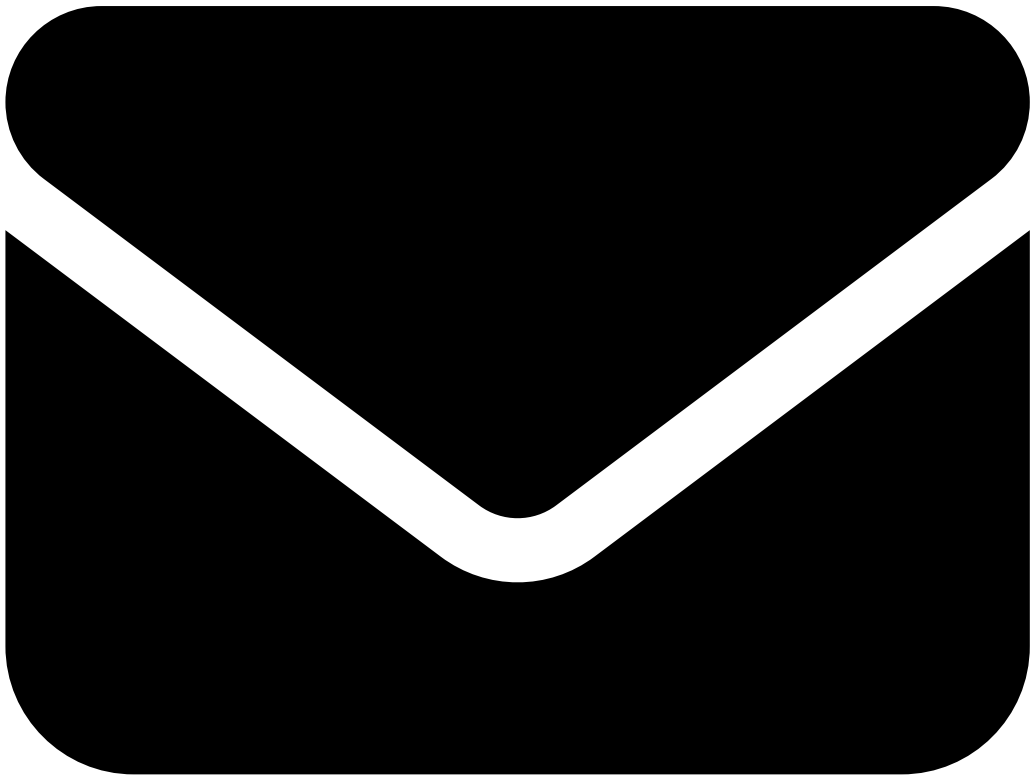
toasted pine nuts....ENJOY!!

Orecchiette with Italian Sausage and Broccoli Rabe

Orecchiette with Italian Sausage and broccoli Rabe

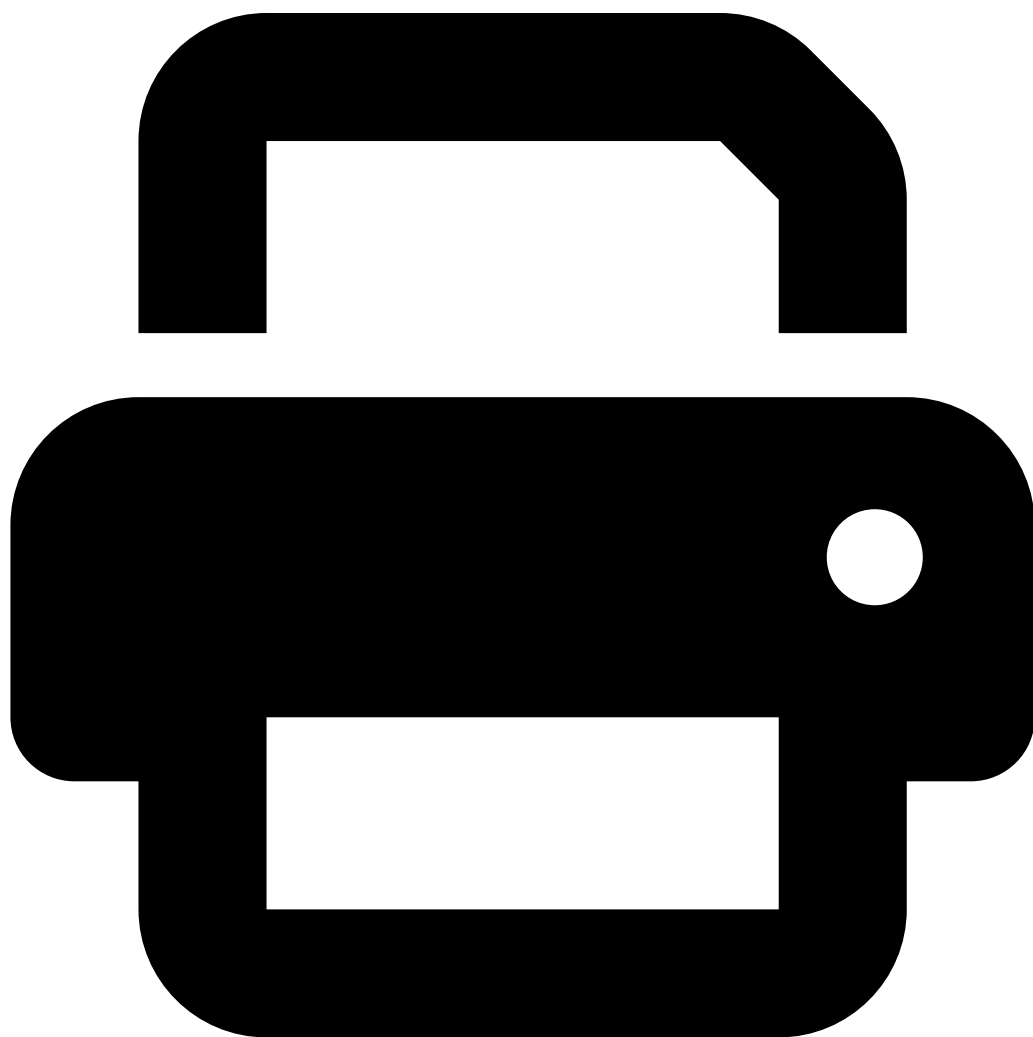
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Orecchiette with Italian Sausage and Broccoli rabe was a favorite on our restaurant menu – not just with our guests, but with the cooks in the kitchen too. They loved making it because it came together quickly and easily, yet never failed to impress. The little “ears” of pasta held onto every bit of savory sausage and garlic, while the broccolini added a fresh, vibrant balance. It was rustic, comforting, and satisfying – the kind of dish that reminded us all why simple Italian cooking is so timeless. Now, I’m sharing it here so you can enjoy the same flavors at home.

- **Broccoli rabe is meant to be slightly bitter.** Its earthy, peppery flavor is what makes this dish so traditional. The richness of the Italian sausage balances the bitterness perfectly.
- **Don’t overcook the broccoli rabe.** Blanching it briefly before adding it to the skillet helps tame the bitterness while keeping it vibrant and tender.
- **Use good-quality Italian sausage.** Sweet or hot Italian

sausage both work well. Hot sausage adds a little extra kick, while sweet sausage lets the broccoli rabe shine.

- **Orecchiette is the traditional pasta.** Meaning “little ears” in Italian, the pasta’s cup-like shape catches the crumbled sausage, garlic, and small pieces of broccoli rabe in every bite.
- **Reserve the pasta water.** Before draining the pasta, save about 1 cup of the cooking water. The starchy water helps create a silky sauce that coats the pasta without needing cream.
- **Freshly grated Parmesan makes a difference.** Skip the pre-shredded cheese if possible. Fresh Parmesan melts smoothly and adds a richer, nuttier flavor.
- **A touch of heat is traditional.** Red pepper flakes complement the sausage and broccoli rabe without overpowering the dish. Add more or less to suit your taste.
- **This is a true Italian pantry meal.** With just a handful of simple ingredients, this recipe proves that authentic Italian cooking relies on quality ingredients rather than complicated techniques.
- **It reheats beautifully.** Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Add a splash of water or chicken broth when reheating to loosen the sauce.
- **Finish with extra virgin olive oil.** A light drizzle just before serving brightens the flavors and gives the dish the authentic finishing touch found in many Italian kitchens.

Orecchiette with Italian Sausage and Broccoli Rabe



This **Orecchiette with Italian Sausage and Broccoli Rabe** is a classic Southern Italian pasta dish that's simple enough for a weeknight but impressive enough for guests. Savory Italian sausage, slightly bitter broccoli rabe, garlic, and a touch of red pepper flakes come together with orecchiette to create a perfectly balanced meal finished with freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

- 12 oz orecchiette pasta
- 1 lb. spicy Italian sausage (casings removed)
- 1 bunch broccolini (trimmed and cut into bite-sized pieces)
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes (adjust to taste)
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 cup reserved pasta water
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (plus extra for serving)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

1. Prep the broccoli rabe Trim off the tough ends of the broccolini stems (about ½ inch) and cut the stalks into

bite-sized pieces, keeping the florets mostly intact.

2. Blanch the broccoli Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add broccolini and cook for 2–3 minutes until bright green and just tender. Transfer to a kitchen towel dry and set aside.
3. Cook the pasta: In the same pot of salted water, add orecchiette and cook until al dente. Reserve 1 cup of pasta water before draining.
4. Cook the sausage: In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add sausage and cook, breaking it into small pieces, until browned and cooked through, about 6–7 minutes.
5. Build the sauce: Add , garlic, onion and red pepper flakes. Cook until fragrant and translucent. (3-4 minutes.) deglaze the pan with the white wine, waiting until fully absorbed before proceeding. Then add the chicken stock, and pasta water, simmer for 5 minutes or until sauce begins to thicken.
6. Combine everything: Add pasta and blanched broccoli rabe to the skillet, tossing with sausage. Gradually add reserved pasta water until the sauce lightly coats the pasta.
7. Finish and serve: Stir in Parmesan, season with salt and pepper, and toss well. Serve hot with extra cheese on top.

Main Course

Italian

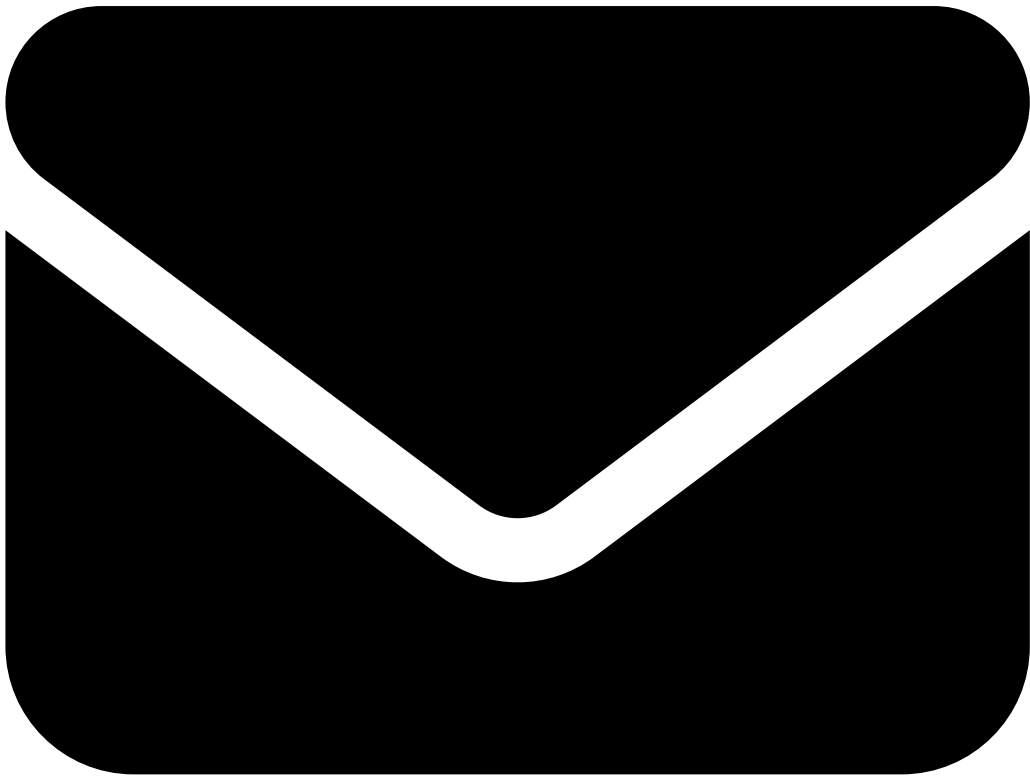
Italian Orecchiette with Sausage and Broccoli Rabe

Tuscan Chicken Under a Brick Recipe

Tuscan Chicken Under a Brick Recipe

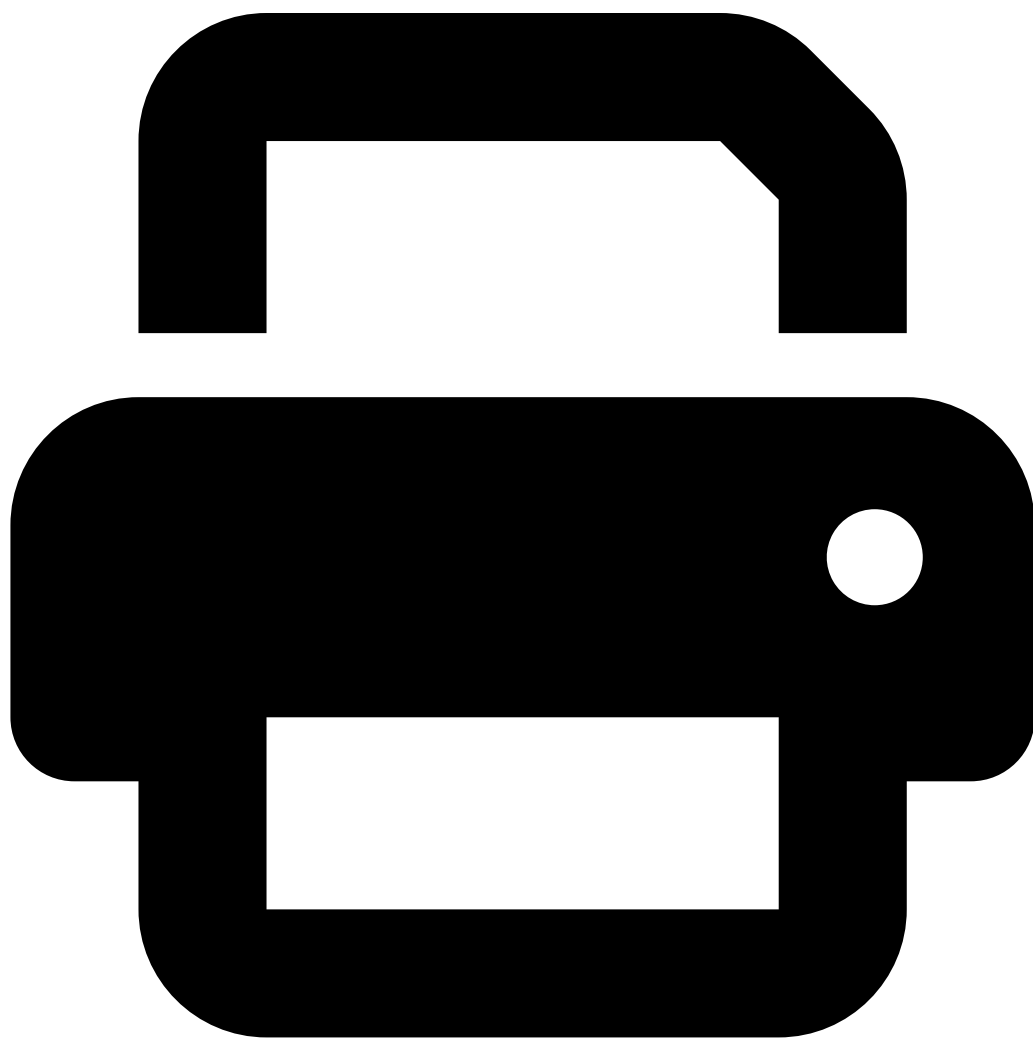
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In Tuscany, there's a beloved way of cooking chicken known as *Pollo al Mattone* – literally, “chicken under a brick.” Traditionally, the chicken is flattened and pressed beneath hot bricks while it cooks, creating crisp golden skin and juicy, flavorful meat. Since I don't keep bricks in my kitchen, I use a heavy cast iron pan instead, which delivers the same beautiful results with a touch of rustic Italian charm. This method transforms simple ingredients like garlic, rosemary, thyme, and lemon into a dish that feels both traditional and effortless.

Things to Know About Tuscan chicken under a brick

- **What does *Pollo al Mattone* mean?**

In Italian, it translates to “chicken under a brick.” The brick's weight helps press the chicken flat, ensuring even cooking, golden crisp skin, and juicy

meat.

- **Do I need a brick?**

Traditionally, yes – the brick is wrapped in foil and heated. But a heavy cast iron skillet or Dutch oven works just as well and is easier to manage in a home kitchen.

- **Why spatchcock the chicken?**

Removing the backbone and flattening the chicken helps it cook faster and more evenly. It's the key to achieving that irresistible crisp skin without drying out the meat.

- **Flavor profile.**

This dish is all about simplicity. Olive oil, garlic, rosemary, thyme, and lemon are classic Tuscan ingredients that let the chicken shine.

- **Cooking method.**

While it can be made on the stovetop or in the oven, it's equally delicious grilled over wood or charcoal – the way it's often enjoyed in Tuscany.

- **Serving ideas.**

Pair with roasted potatoes, Tuscan white beans, or a peppery arugula salad. Keep the sides rustic and simple, just like the dish itself.

- **Love this Tuscan-style chicken? Try my **Oven-Roasted Spatchcock Chicken** next for another easy way to get juicy, golden chicken at home.**

Tuscan Chicken Under a Brick Recipe



Tuscan Chicken Under a Brick is a classic Italian dish featuring a whole chicken pressed under a weight for incredibly crispy, golden skin and juicy, flavorful meat. Seasoned with fresh herbs, garlic, lemon, and olive oil, this rustic recipe brings authentic Tuscan flavors to your table.

- 1 medium whole chicken (about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ –4 lbs, backbone removed and butterflied (spatchcocked))
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves (minced)
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary (finely chopped)
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme (leaves removed)
- 1 lemon (zest and juice)
- salt and pepper to taste (or to taste)

1. Prepare the Chicken

Place the chicken breast-side down on a cutting board. Using sharp kitchen shears, cut along both sides of the backbone and remove it. Flip the chicken breast-side up and press firmly to flatten. Pat dry with paper towels.

2. Season the Chicken

In a small bowl, mix together olive oil, garlic, rosemary, thyme, lemon zest, lemon juice, salt, and pepper.

Rub the mixture all over the chicken, making sure to get under the skin where possible for maximum flavor.

3. Heat the Pan

Preheat a large cast iron skillet over medium-high heat for 5 minutes until hot. Lightly oil the pan.

4. Cook the Chicken

Place the chicken skin-side down in the hot skillet.

Carefully place another heavy cast iron skillet (or a Dutch oven) on top of the chicken to press it flat.

Cook for about **12–15 minutes** without moving, until the skin is deeply golden and crispy.

5. Finish Cooking

Remove the top skillet and carefully flip the chicken over.

Return the weight on top and cook another **30–35 minutes**, or until the thickest part of the thigh registers 165°F (74°C) on a meat thermometer.

6. Rest and Serve

Transfer chicken to a cutting board and let rest for 10 minutes before carving.

Serve with lemon wedges, roasted potatoes, or a crisp green salad.

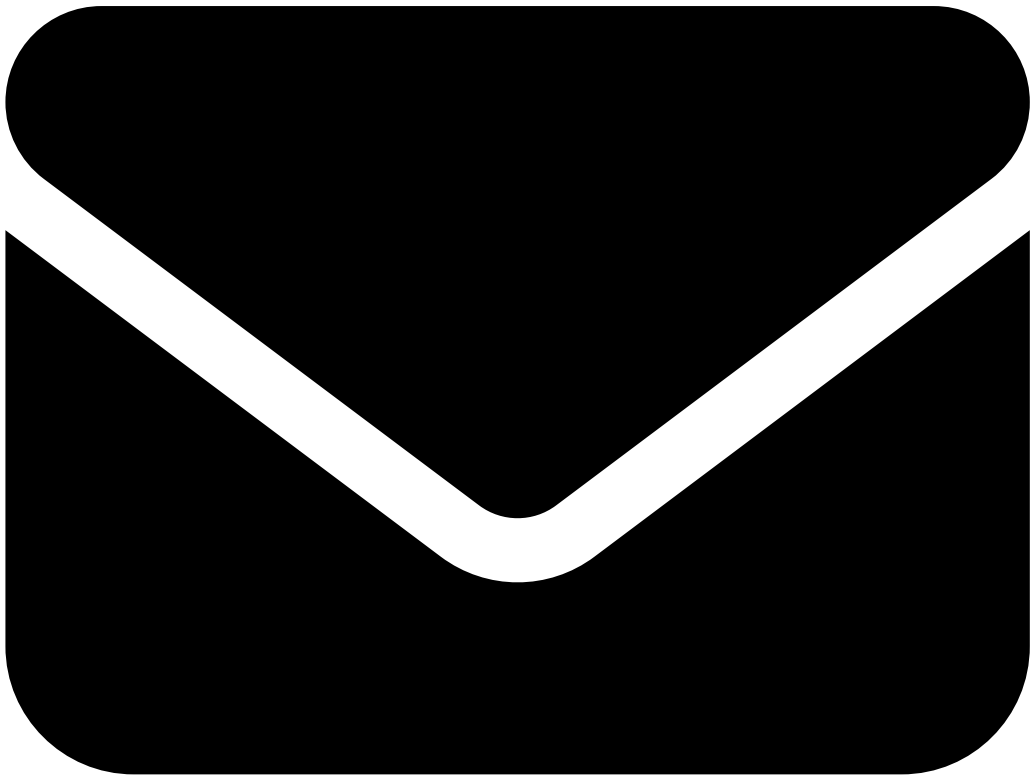
Main Course
Italian

Italian Braciole in Tomato Sauce

Italian Braciole in Tomato Sauce

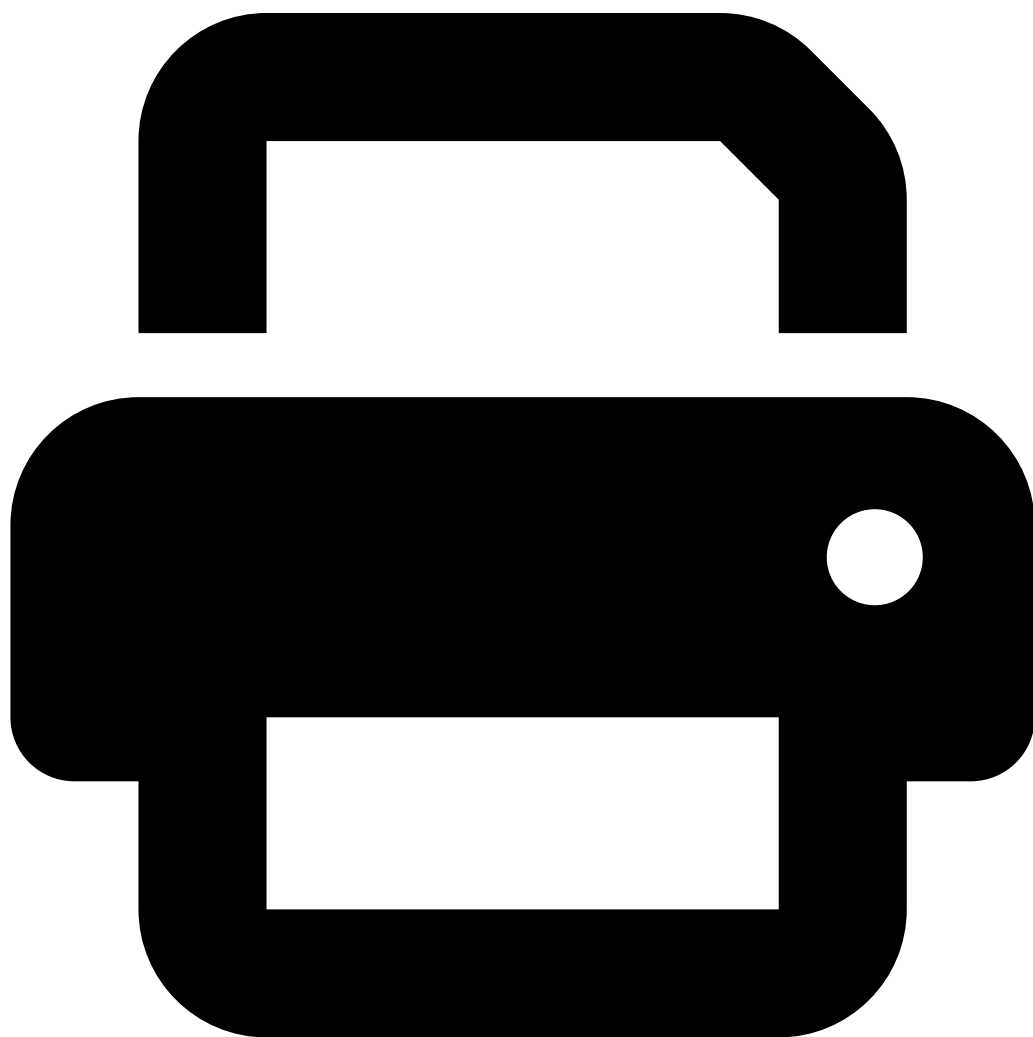
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The first day of September always feels like the true start of my fall cooking. The air turns a little cooler, and I naturally begin to crave those cozy Italian dishes that remind me of home.

When I was growing up, Sundays meant sauce simmering on the stove. My mom usually made it with meatballs, ribs, sausage – or sometimes all three. But every once in a while, she added **braciole**, and that made the meal extra special. She would pound slices of beef thin, fill them with cheese, herbs, and breadcrumbs, then roll them up tightly. After slowly cooking in the sauce until tender, they became the kind of dish that felt like a celebration.

For me, braciole will always mark the beginning of hearty, comforting meals – perfect for the cooler season ahead.

Things to Know About Italian Braciole

What is Braciole?

Braciole (pronounced *brah-cho-lee*) is a classic Italian dish made with thin slices of beef rolled around a savory filling, then simmered slowly in tomato sauce until tender. Once cooked, the rolls are sliced and served with the rich sauce over pasta or alongside crusty bread.

Regional Variations

Every Italian family makes braciole a little differently. In Southern Italy, you'll often find fillings with raisins and pine nuts for a sweet-and-savory touch. In other regions, it's kept simple with just breadcrumbs, garlic, parsley, and cheese. Some families also prepare braciole with pork or veal instead of beef.

Cooking Low and Slow

The key to tender braciole is patience. The beef needs time to soften as it gently simmers in the sauce, soaking up all that flavor. A heavy pot or Dutch oven works best for even cooking.

Perfect for Sunday Dinner

Braciole has always been considered a special occasion dish, often reserved for Sunday dinners or holidays. Making it on the first cool days of fall captures that same cozy sense of comfort and tradition.

Make-Ahead Friendly

Like many Italian dishes, braciole tastes even better the next day after the flavors have had time to meld. It's the perfect make-ahead meal – impressive for guests yet easy to reheat and serve

Ready to bring a little Italian tradition into your kitchen? Try this braciole recipe for your next Sunday dinner – then let me know in the comments how your family enjoyed it! Don't forget to check out my other cozy Italian recipes like spicy Italian sausage gnocchi soup or easy crispy chicken parmesan

for more fall cooking inspiration.

Italian Braciole in Tomato Sauce



For the Braciole:

- 4-6 thin slices beef top round (about 6–8 ounces each, pounded to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup breadcrumbs (preferably Italian seasoned)
- 2 garlic cloves (finely minced)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh parsley (chopped)
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts (optional, but traditional in many regions)
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper
- Olive oil (for searing)
- Butcher's twine or toothpicks for tying

For the Sauce:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion (finely chopped)
- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped parsley
- 1 can (28 ounces crushed tomatoes)
- 1 can 14 ounces tomato sauce
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red wine
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano (or 2 teaspoons fresh)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)

- 1 bay leaf
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Fresh basil (for finishing)

1. **Prepare the filling** – In a small bowl, combine breadcrumbs, Parmesan, garlic, parsley, and pine nuts. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
2. **Assemble the rolls** – Lay each beef slice flat. cover with plastic wrap and pound thin divide the filling evenly in the center of each slice. Roll the beef tightly into a log and secure with twine or toothpicks.
3. **Brown the braciolo** – Heat olive oil in a large heavy pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Sear the beef rolls on all sides until browned, 6–8 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
4. **Make the sauce** – In the same pot, add more olive oil if needed. Sauté onion until soft, about 5 minutes, then stir in garlic and parsley. Deglaze with red wine, scraping up any browned bits. Add crushed tomatoes and the sauce, oregano, red pepper flakes, bay leaf, salt, and pepper. and stir well, Simmer covered for 1 hour
5. Return the braciolo to the pot, nestling them into the sauce. Cover with a lid and simmer gently on low for about 1 hour, or until the beef is tender. Stir occasionally and add a splash of water if sauce thickens too much.
6. **Serve** – Remove the twine or toothpicks, slice the braciolo into rounds, and serve topped with sauce. Garnish with fresh basil and more grated cheese.

7. **More Serving Suggestions for Braciolo**

Over Pasta – Toss the rich tomato sauce with spaghetti,

rigatoni, or ziti, then serve the sliced bracirole on top.

With Polenta – Creamy polenta is a classic Italian pairing that soaks up all the delicious sauce.

Crusty Bread – A warm loaf is a must for dipping into the sauce.

Vegetable Sides – Pair with roasted broccoli, garlicky green beans, or a simple side salad for balance.

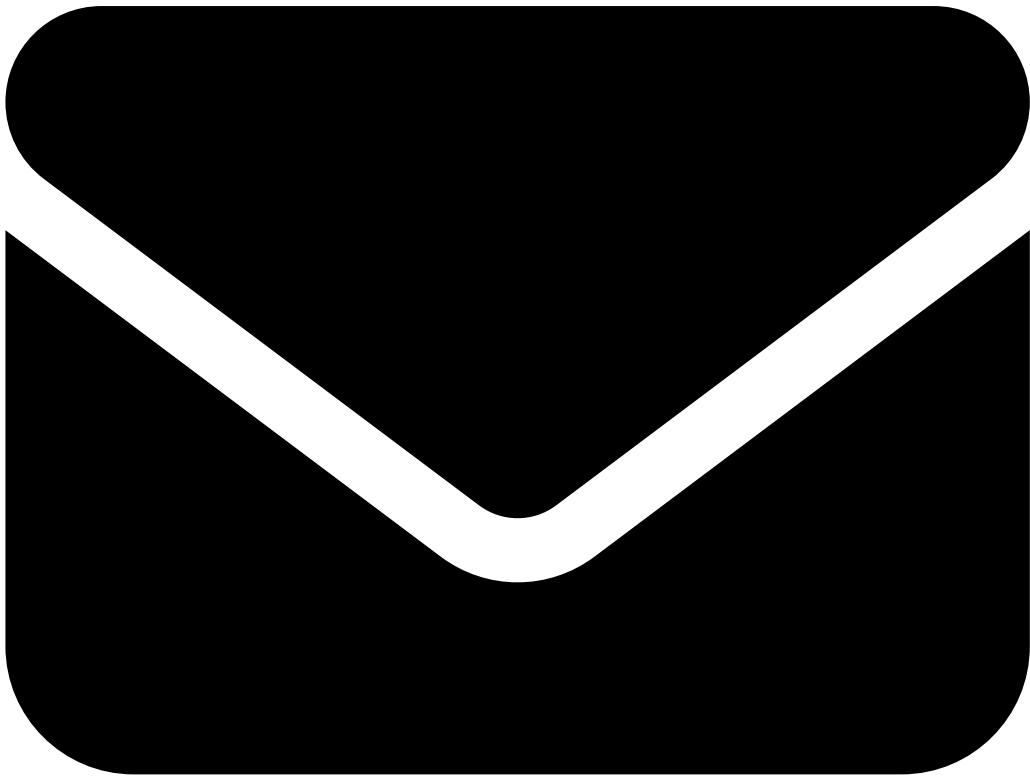
Wine Pairing – A medium-bodied red like Chianti or Montepulciano complements the richness perfectly.

Pork Medallions Marsala with Mushrooms

Pork Medallions Marsala with Mushrooms

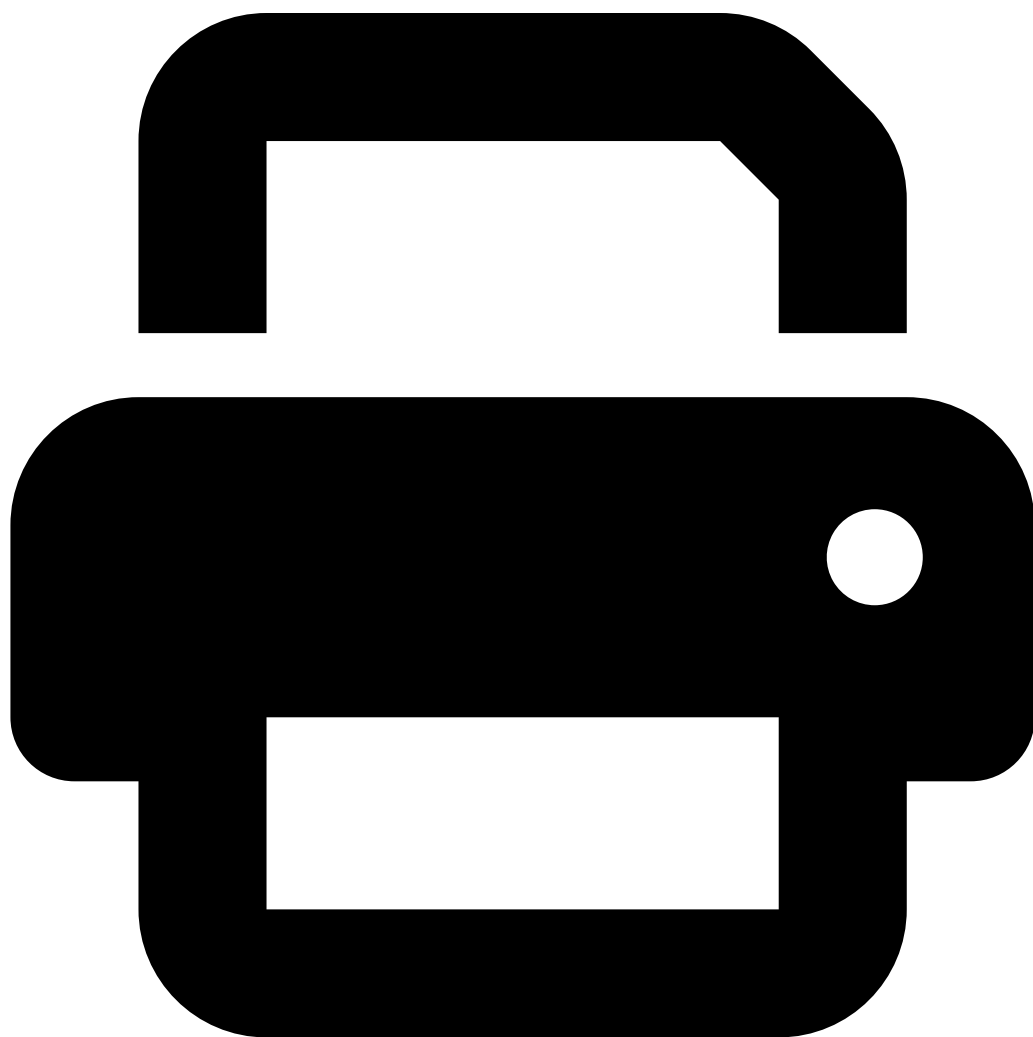
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When the weather turns crisp, I crave meals that feel rustic yet refined. Pork Medallions Marsala is one of those dishes that instantly brings me back to my restaurant days. It was a customer favorite on our fall menu – tender rounds of pork seared until golden, then simmered in a silky Marsala wine sauce with mushrooms.

The dish had just the right balance of comfort and elegance, which made it perfect for both a weeknight dinner and a special occasion. I remember guests telling us it felt like something you'd order in a little Italian trattoria, yet it came together so simply in our kitchen.

Now, I make it at home for my family. The earthy mushrooms, sweet Marsala, and tender pork remind me of those busy fall nights at the restaurant, when the dining room was full and this dish was always on repeat. It's still just as cozy, comforting, and elegant – but now it's a recipe you can bring

to your own table.

Restaurant Memory

This dish first appeared on our fall menu when the cooler evenings started calling for something heartier. We wanted a dish that felt warm and comforting, yet still had a touch of elegance – something our guests could enjoy with a glass of red wine. Pork Medallions Marsala checked every box.

I still remember how quickly it became a customer favorite. Tables would order it again and again, sometimes even requesting extra sauce to soak up with bread. For me, it was always a joy to watch a recipe created in our kitchen turn into a signature dish that brought people back. Today, I love recreating that same feeling at home.

Things to know about this Pork Medallions Marsala with Mushrooms

You said:

- **Marsala Wine Choices** – Sweet Marsala gives the sauce a richer, caramelized flavor, while dry Marsala leans more savory. Both work – it's simply personal preference.
- **No Marsala?** – If you can't find Marsala wine, a dry sherry or Madeira makes a good substitute. Even a dry white wine with a splash of brandy works in a pinch.
- **The Right Cut** – Pork tenderloin is best here since it stays juicy and tender when sliced into medallions. Pork loin can work, but may need a slightly longer cooking time.
- **Don't Overcook the Pork** – Pork is perfectly done at 145°F with a slight blush in the center. Overcooking will make the medallions tough.

- **Mushroom Options** – Cremini, button, or baby bella mushrooms are classic, but feel free to try wild mushrooms for deeper flavor.
- **Make It Creamy (Optional)** – Adding a splash of heavy cream gives the sauce a velvety richness, but it's just as delicious without.
- **What to Serve It With** – Mashed potatoes, creamy polenta, or buttered noodles are perfect for soaking up the sauce. For a lighter option, try roasted green beans or a simple arugula salad.
- **Meal Prep Friendly** – The sauce reheats beautifully, so you can make it ahead and gently warm before serving.
- If you loved this Pork Medallions Marsala recipe, you'll also enjoy these fall-friendly Italian dishes from the blog:
 - **Pork Chop Piccata** – Tender pork in a tangy lemon-caper sauce, perfect for weeknight dinners.
 - **Italian Roasted Potatoes** – Crispy, garlicky, and a perfect side to soak up any sauce.
 - **Butternut Squash Risotto with Sage & Parmesan** – Creamy, comforting, and full of fall flavors.

Pork Medallions Marsala with Mushrooms



- 2 pork tenderloins (about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs total, trimmed and cut into 1-inch medallions)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour (for dredging)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil (divided)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 8 ounces cremini or button mushrooms (sliced)
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 cup Marsala wine (sweet or dry)
- 1 cup chicken stock (low-sodium)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream (optional, for a richer sauce)
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme or chopped parsley (for garnish)

1. **Prep the pork:** Slice pork tenderloin into medallions, about 1-inch thick. Season generously with salt and pepper. Lightly dredge in flour, shaking off excess.
2. **Sear:** Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Sear pork medallions in batches, about 2–3 minutes per side, until golden but not fully cooked. Transfer to a plate.
3. **Cook the mushrooms:** Add remaining olive oil and butter to the skillet. Sauté mushrooms until browned, about 5–6 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute more.
4. **Deglaze with Marsala:** Pour in the Marsala wine, scraping up any browned bits. Let simmer 2 minutes to reduce slightly.

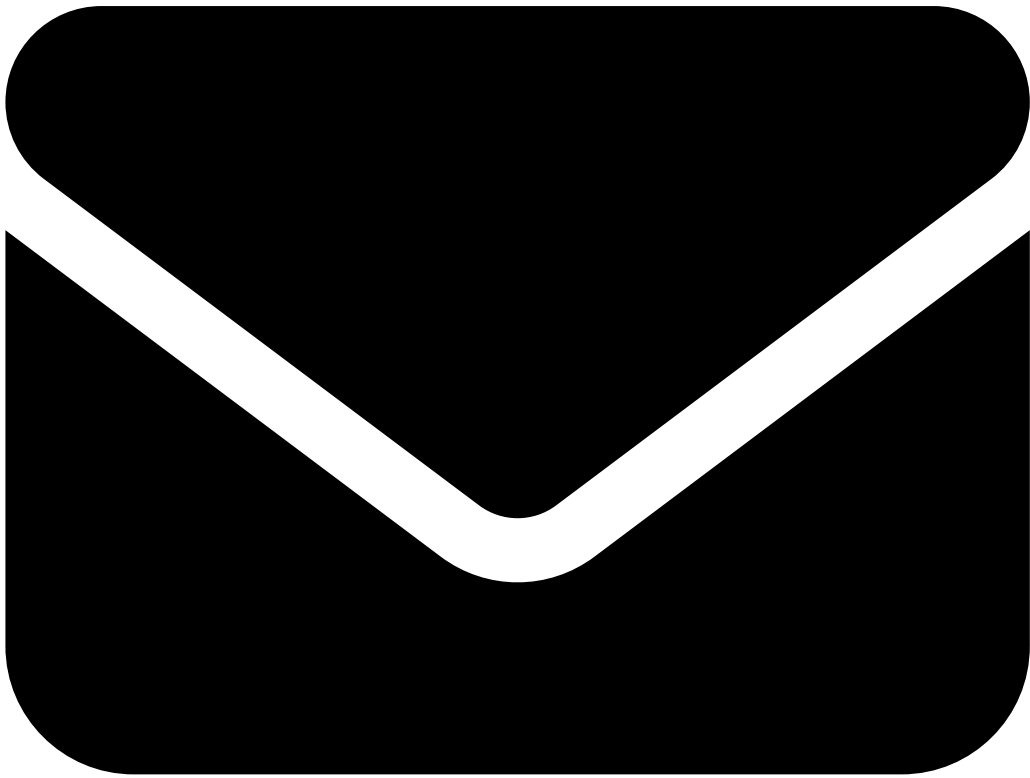
5. **Finish the sauce:** Add chicken stock and optional cream. Return pork medallions to the skillet, nestling into the sauce. Simmer gently 5–7 minutes, until pork is cooked through (145°F internal temperature).
 6. **Serve:** Garnish with thyme or parsley. Serve over mashed potatoes, polenta, or buttered pasta
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Crispy Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wing Recipe

Crispy Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wing Recipe

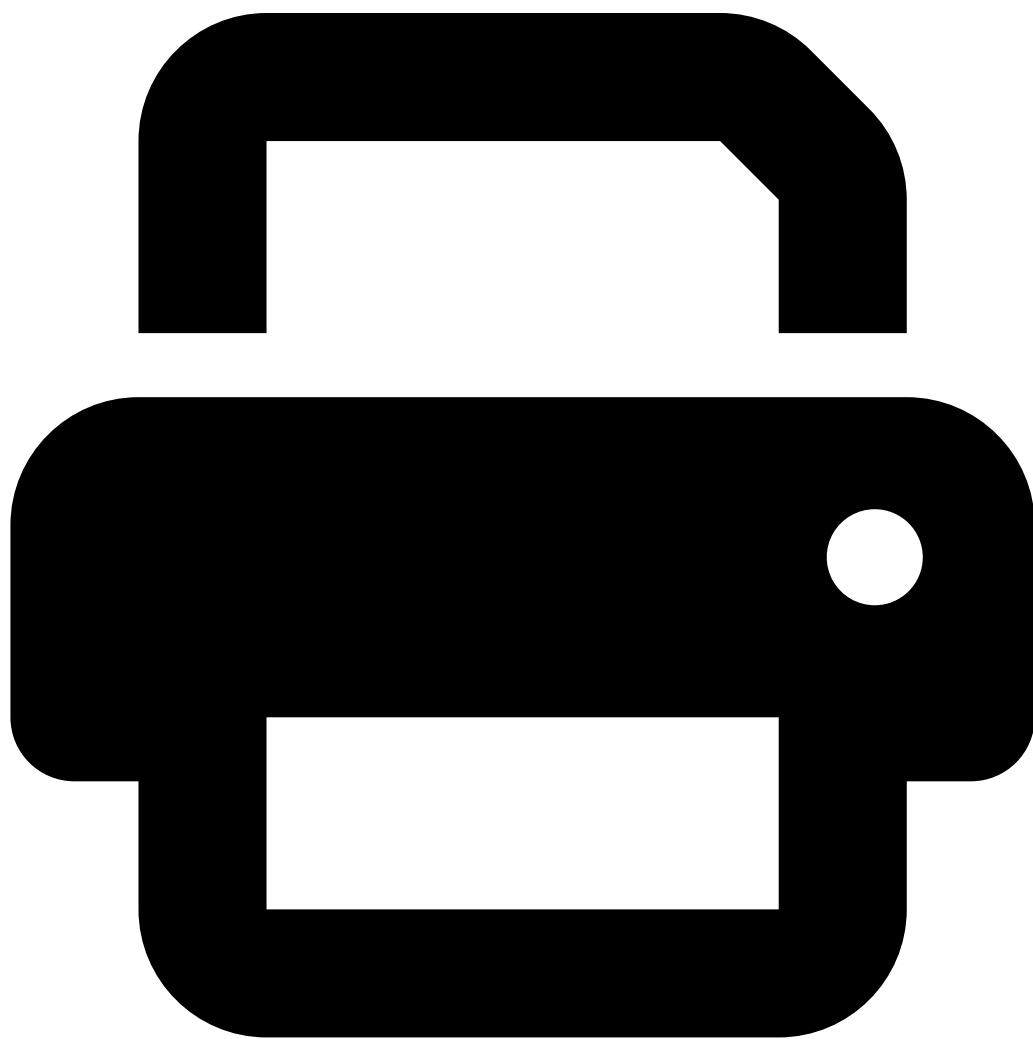
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Some of our most-loved recipes have their roots in the kitchens of our restaurants, and these **Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wings** are no exception. Just like our **Smashed Italian Sausage & Pepper Sandwiches**, these wings quickly became a customer favorite – and later, a family favorite at home too.

Back in the restaurant, we made them the classic way: fried until golden and crispy, with that irresistible crunch that made them a staple on the menu. We kept the seasoning simple – salt, pepper, paprika, mustard, garlic powder, and a touch of cornstarch – but the result was magic. Crispy wings with just the right balance of smoky, spicy flavor that had people coming back for more.

Over time, I started making them at home too, sometimes grilling or baking instead of frying, but always keeping that same bold flavor. Whether served with a cold drink at the bar or around our own family table, these wings are the kind of

dish that proves simple ingredients can deliver unforgettable flavor.

Crispy Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wing Recipe



For the Wings

- 2 lb chicken wings, split into drumettes and flats, tips removed
- 1 tbsp baking powder (aluminum-free)
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp black pepper

For the Buffalo BBQ Sauce

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup buffalo wing sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup barbecue sauce
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tbsp honey (optional, for a touch of sweetness)
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

For Serving (Optional)

- Ranch or blue cheese dressing
- Celery sticks
- Carrot sticks
- Chopped fresh parsley

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with foil and place a wire rack on top. Lightly grease the rack.
2. Pat the chicken wings completely dry with paper towels. Dry skin is the key to crispy wings.
3. In a large bowl, combine the baking powder, garlic powder, onion powder, smoked paprika, salt, and black pepper. Toss the wings until evenly coated.
4. Arrange the wings in a single layer on the prepared wire rack, leaving space between each wing.
5. Bake for 20 minutes, then flip the wings and continue baking for another 20–25 minutes, or until golden brown and crispy.
6. While the wings bake, whisk together the buffalo wing sauce, barbecue sauce, melted butter, honey (if using), and Worcestershire sauce in a small saucepan over low heat. Warm for 2–3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
7. Transfer the hot wings to a large bowl. Pour the warm Buffalo BBQ sauce over the wings and toss until evenly coated.
8. For extra caramelization, return the sauced wings to the oven or place them under the broiler for 2–3 minutes, watching carefully to prevent burning.
9. Serve immediately with ranch or blue cheese dressing,

celery sticks, and carrot sticks.

10. Baking powder helps create an extra crispy skin without frying.

For a smokier flavor, grill the wings over medium heat for 3–5 minutes after saucing instead of broiling.

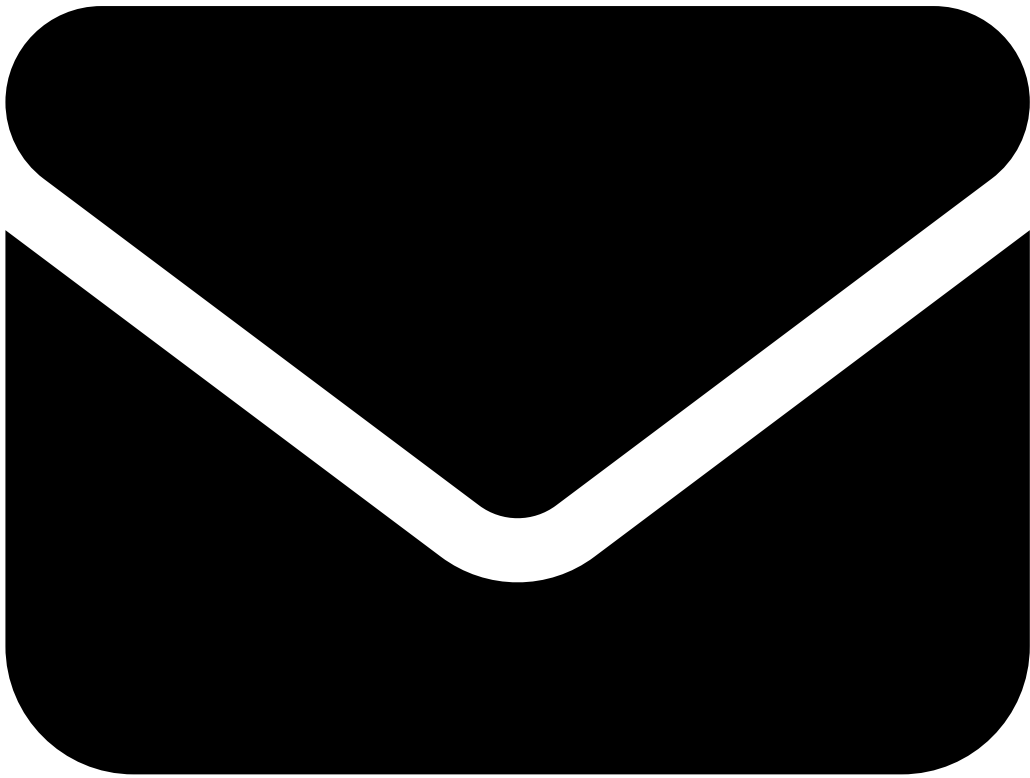
Adjust the heat by using more barbecue sauce for a milder flavor or adding extra buffalo sauce for more spice.

Smashed Italian Sausage & Pepper Sandwiches

Smashed Italian Sausage & Pepper Sandwiches

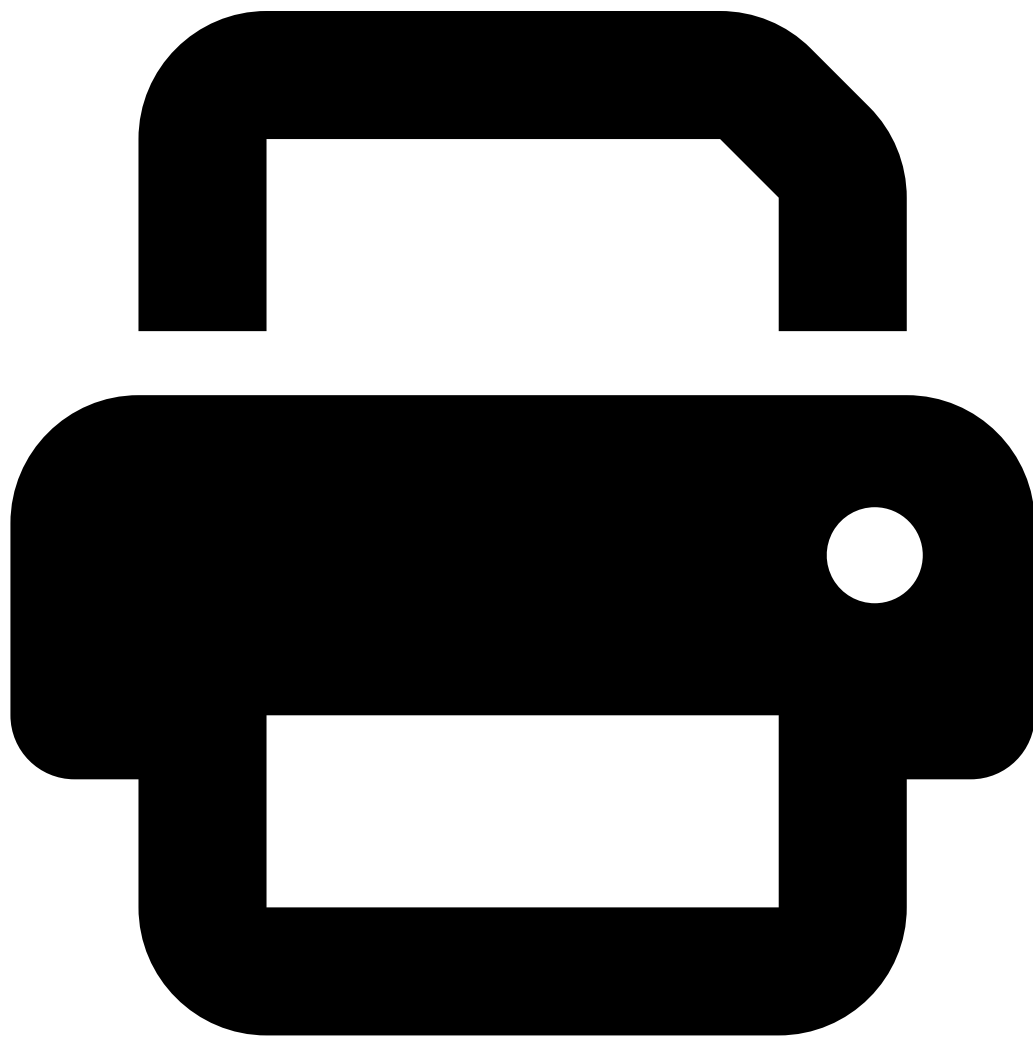
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Smashed Italian Sausage & Pepper Sandwiches are more than just a recipe for us—they're a taste of where it all began. At our very first hole-in-the-wall sandwich shop, these sandwiches quickly became our signature. We started smashing the sausage patties flat on the griddle as a way to speed up cooking during busy rushes, but the crispy edges and bold flavor turned them into an instant hit. Served on crusty rolls with sweet peppers and onions, they were simple, hearty, and unforgettable. Sausage and peppers have always been an Italian-American classic, but our smashed version gave it a new twist that customers loved—and it's still one of our favorites today.

What to know about these Smashed Italian Sausage & Pepper Sandwiches

- **A Shop Original:** These sandwiches started at our very first hole-in-the-wall shop, where smashing the sausage

helped speed up cooking and became an instant crowd favorite.

- **Crispy Edges, Juicy Inside:** Smashing the sausage flat gives you those caramelized, crispy edges while keeping the inside tender and flavorful.
- **Classic Italian-American Roots:** Sausage and peppers are a staple at Italian feasts, family cookouts, and street fairs—this version just adds a bold twist.
- **Make It Your Own:** Try adding provolone or mozzarella, a spoonful of marinara, or even spicy peppers for extra heat.
- **Perfect for Any Occasion:** Great for a weeknight dinner, game-day sandwich, or backyard cookout—these feed a crowd and taste even better with a cold drink in hand.
- Take a trip back to our first hole-in-the-wall shop with every bite! If you loved these smashed Italian sausage sandwiches, don't miss our
- Italian pesto chicken sandwich or one of my personal favorites grilled Italian vegetable panini

Smashed Italian Sausage Sandwiches with Peppers & Onions



- 1 lb. Italian sausage links (about 4 links, casings

removed)

- 2 bell peppers (red, yellow, or green, sliced)
- 1 large onion (sliced)
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt (plus more to taste)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. black pepper
- 4 crusty sandwich rolls (hoagie, ciabatta, or Italian bread)

1. Prepare the Sausage

Remove sausage from the casings.

Divide into 4 portions, shape loosely into patties, and smash them flat with the back of a spatula or small pan.

2. Cook the Sausage

Heat a skillet or griddle over medium-high heat.

Cook the smashed sausage patties until browned and crisp on both sides, about 3–4 minutes per side.

Transfer to a plate and keep warm.

3. Cook the Peppers & Onions

In the same pan, add the olive oil.

Toss in sliced peppers and onion. garlic Season with salt and pepper.

Cook until softened and lightly caramelized, about 8–10 minutes.

4. Assemble the Sandwich

Slice the rolls and lightly toast if desired.

Layer each smashed sausage patty on a roll, then top

with peppers and onions.

Add cheese if using, letting it melt slightly over the hot sausage.

5. Serve

Press the sandwich lightly to bring everything together.

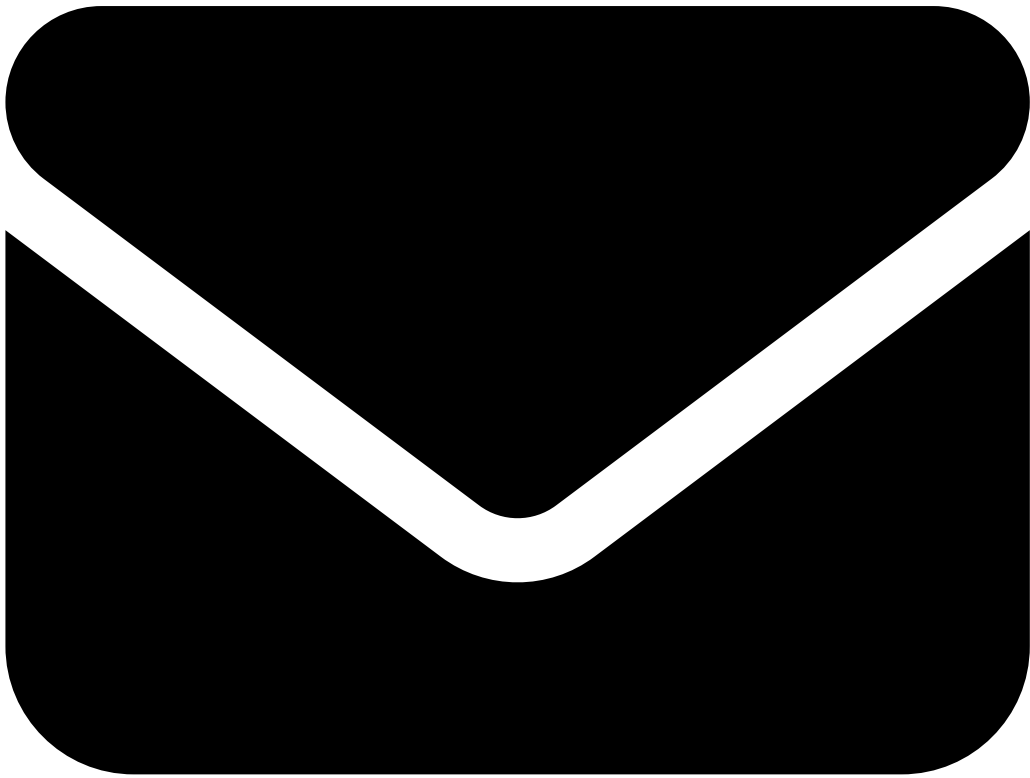
Serve hot and enjoy!

**Italian Crispy roasted
Potatoes**

**Italian Crispy roasted
Potatoes**

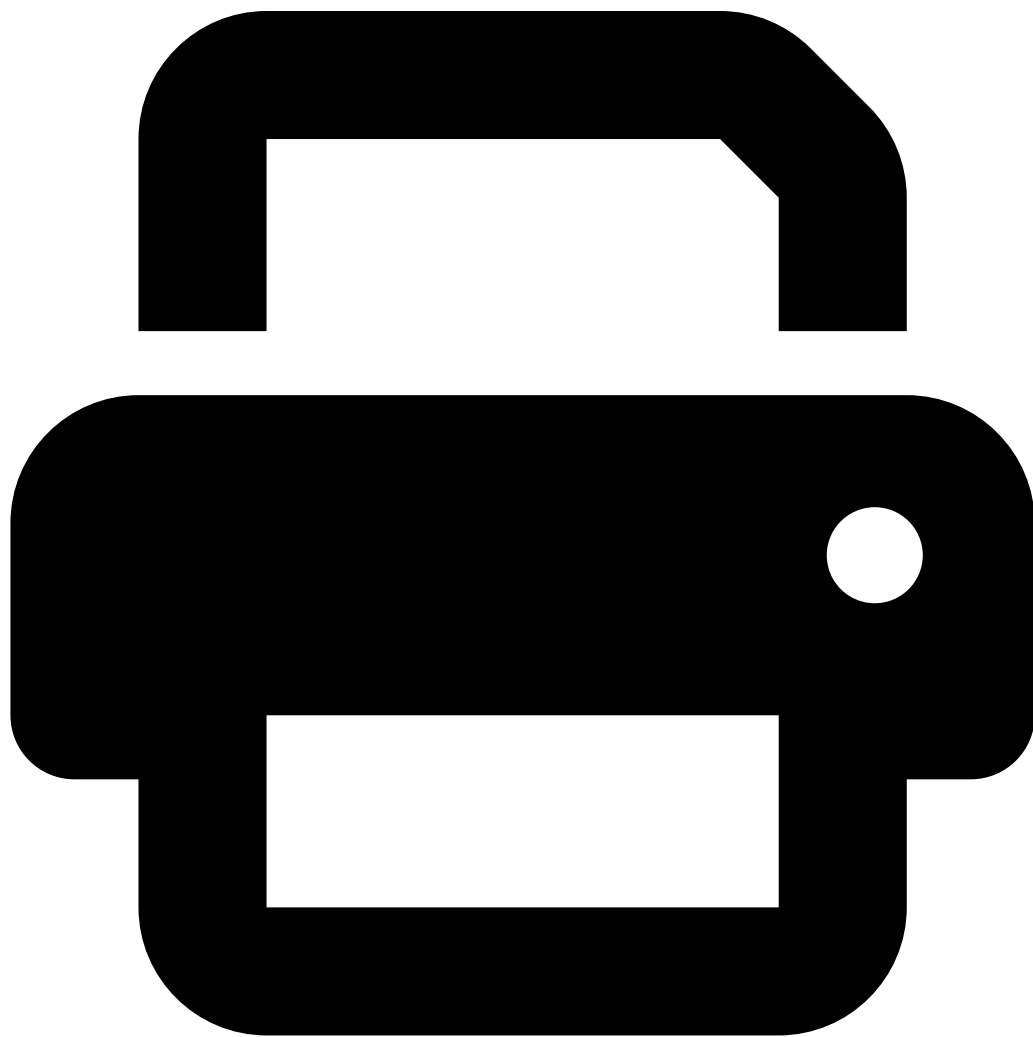
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These **Italian crispy roasted potatoes** are straight from my mother's kitchen. She'd parboil them, toss with olive oil, garlic, rosemary, and a little lemon, then roast until golden and crunchy. Simple, comforting, and always the first thing to disappear at the table – I still make them just the way she did. To this day, whenever I make them, the smell that fills my kitchen instantly takes me back to her cooking, and I can't help but smile. This recipe is her original method, and it's one I know you'll want to keep on repeat in your own home.

Things to Know About Italian Crispy Roasted Potatoes

- **Parboiling is key:** Cooking the potatoes halfway before roasting helps give them a fluffy inside and that golden, crisp crust.
- **Rough edges = more crunch:** Shaking the potatoes after

draining creates little ridges that crisp up beautifully in the oven.

- **Use the right potato:** Yukon Golds give a buttery texture, while Russets crisp up with an extra crunch – both work well.
- **Fresh rosemary makes a difference:** If you can, use fresh rosemary sprigs. They infuse the oil and potatoes with authentic Italian flavor.
- **Don't skip the lemon:** A little zest before roasting and a squeeze of juice at the end adds brightness and balances the richness.
- **Crowding the pan ruins the crisp:** Spread potatoes in a single layer so they roast instead of steam.
- **Reheating tip:** Pop leftovers back in a hot oven for 10 minutes to bring back their crispness – the microwave won't do them justice.
- **Serve these potatoes alongside a hearty main!** Try my Bone-In Pork Chop Piccata or Stuffed Chicken Breast for a full Italian dinner that everyone will love.

Italian Crispy roasted Potatoes



These Italian Crispy Roasted Potatoes are golden brown on the outside, fluffy on the inside, and seasoned with garlic, Parmesan cheese, fresh herbs, and olive oil. They're an easy Italian-inspired side dish that pairs perfectly with chicken, steak, pork, or seafood.

- 2 lbs. Yukon Gold or Russet potatoes (peeled and cut into wedges)
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary (or 1 tsp dried)
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Juice of 1 lemon
- salt and pepper to taste

1. Parboil the potatoes:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.

Add potato wedges and cook for 5-7 minutes, until just fork-tender but not falling apart.

Drain well and let steam dry for 2 minutes.

2. Rough up the edges:

Shake the colander gently to create a slightly rough surface on the potatoes. This helps them crisp in the oven.

3. Season the potatoes:

Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).

In a large bowl, toss the potatoes with olive oil, minced garlic, rosemary, lemon zest, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.

4. Roast:

Spread the potatoes in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet.

Roast for 35–45 minutes, flipping halfway, until deeply golden and crisp.

5. Finish with lemon:

Remove garlic cloves and rosemary sprigs.

Squeeze fresh lemon juice over the potatoes just before serving.

6. Serving Suggestion

Serve hot as a side with roast chicken, grilled fish, or alongside a big Italian salad.

Side Dish

Italian

Italian crispy roasted potatoes

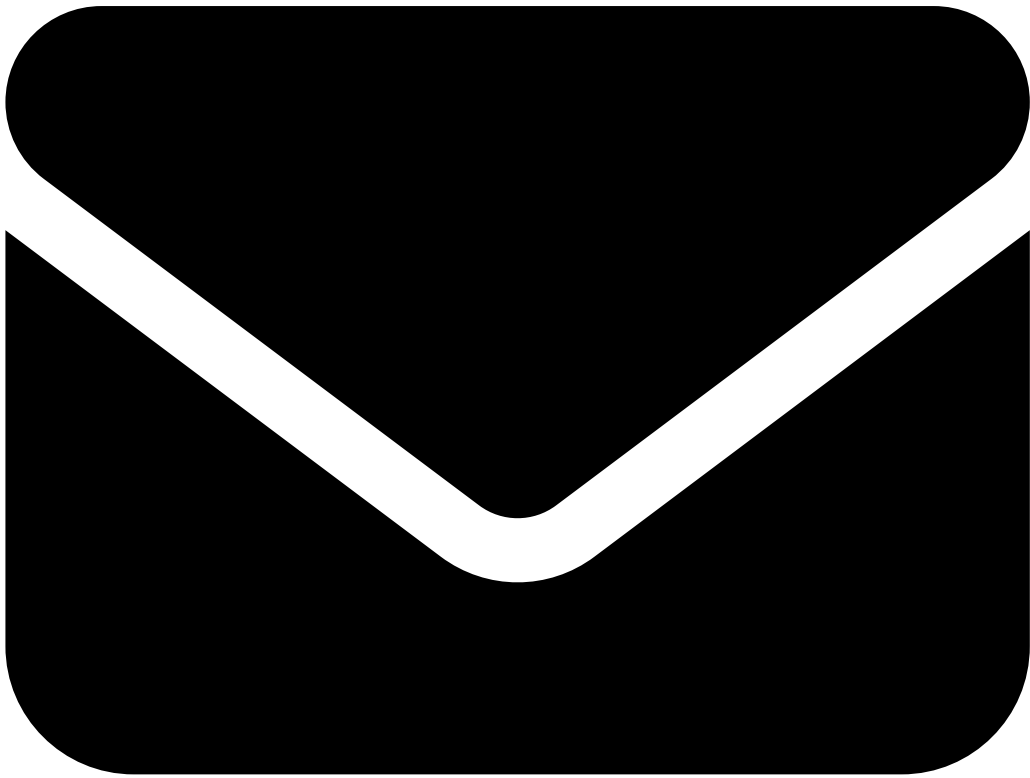
Salmon alla Puttanesca – Rustic Italian Salmon

Salmon alla Puttanesca – Rustic Italian Salmon

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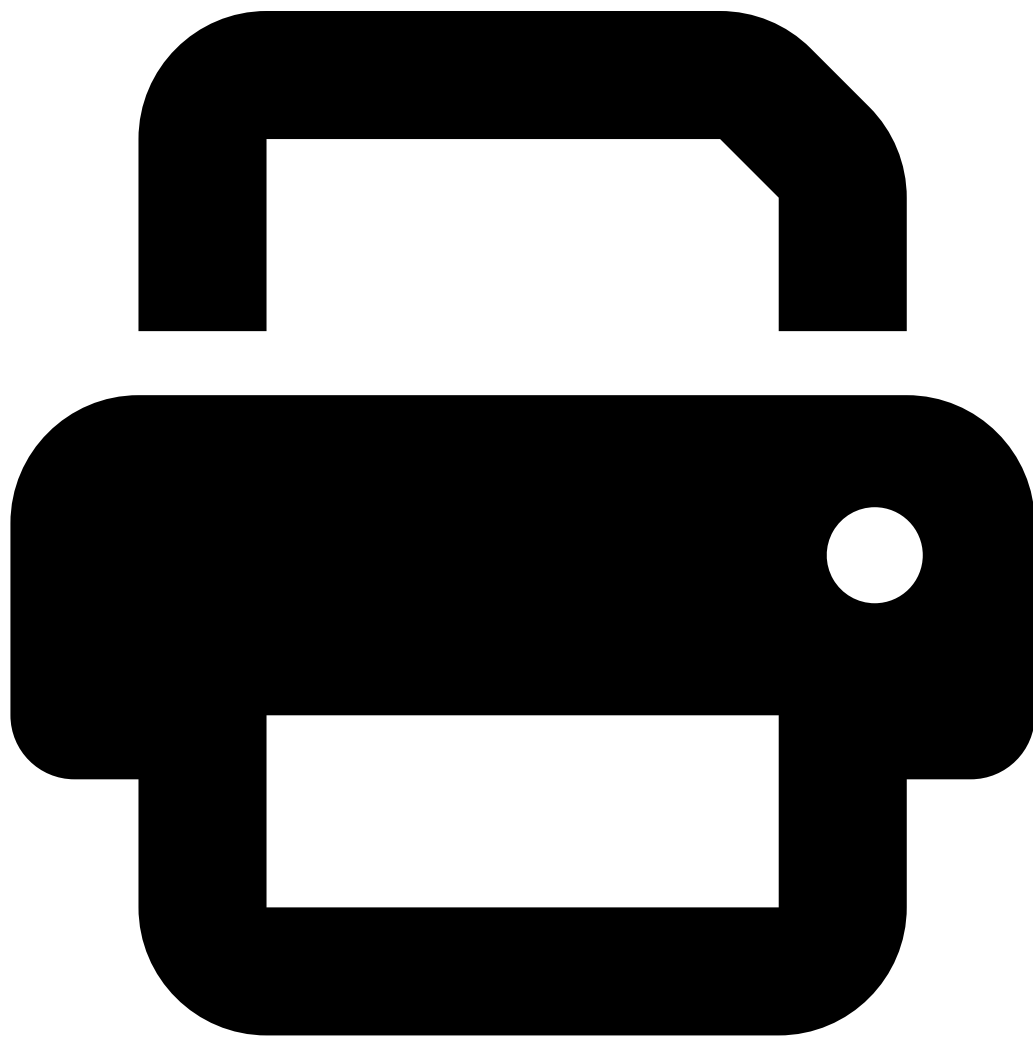
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When I think of bold Italian flavors, puttanesca sauce immediately comes to mind. In our restaurant, we loved taking this rustic southern Italian classic and pairing it with tender salmon fillets for something a little different from the usual pasta. The briny olives, salty capers, and anchovies simmer into a rich tomato sauce that clings beautifully to the fish. Served with pasta or just some crusty bread on the side, this **Salmon alla Puttanesca** always brought the taste of the Mediterranean right to the table – and it's just as easy to make at home.

Things to know about this Salmon alla Puttanesca – Rustic Italian Salmon

- **Origin of the sauce:** Puttanesca sauce comes from southern Italy, most often Naples, and is famous for its

bold mix of tomatoes, olives, capers, and anchovies.

- **Quick to make:** This dish comes together in about 30 minutes, making it perfect for a weeknight dinner with a restaurant-quality feel.
- **Not overly “fishy”:** The anchovies melt into the sauce, adding a savory depth without overpowering the salmon.
- **Flexible serving options:** Serve over spaghetti for a classic Italian pairing, or keep it lighter with roasted vegetables or crusty bread.
- **Fresh or pantry-friendly:** The sauce relies on pantry staples like canned tomatoes, capers, and olives, so you can whip it up anytime.
- **Restaurant-style at home:** We used to serve this in the restaurant, and it was always a favorite because it’s elegant, flavorful, and satisfying without being fussy.
- If you love Italian salmon recipes, don’t miss my quick and easy creamy **Salmon Piccata** – a lighter, lemony dish that’s just as easy and full of flavor! or salmon spiedini tender, flavorful salmon skewers with a hint of lemon and herbs, perfect for a simple weeknight dinner or a summer grill!

Salmon alla Puttanesca – Rustic Italian Salmon



- 4 salmon fillets (about 6 oz each, skin on or off)
- 3 tbsp olive oil (divided)
- 3 garlic cloves (thinly sliced)
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes (optional, for heat)
- 1 can (14 oz crushed tomatoes)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Kalamata olives (pitted and halved)
- 2 tbsp capers
- 4 anchovy fillets (or 1 tsp anchovy paste)
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes (halved (optional for freshness))
- 1 cup white wine
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley (chopped)
- Lemon wedges (for serving)

1. Sear the Salmon

Pat salmon dry, season with salt and pepper.

Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.

Sear salmon skin-side down for 3–4 minutes, then flip and cook another 2–3 minutes until just cooked through. Remove and set aside.

2. Make the Puttanesca Sauce

In the same pan, add remaining 1 tbsp olive oil and garlic. Sauté until fragrant.

Stir in red pepper flakes, anchovies, and oregano. Cook until anchovies melt into the oil. deglaze the pan with the wine , waiting until fully evaporated before proceeding.

Add crushed tomatoes, olives, capers, and cherry tomatoes. Simmer 10 minutes until sauce thickens slightly. Taste and adjust seasoning.

3. Finish the Dish

Nestle salmon fillets into the sauce and spoon sauce over the top. Simmer gently 2 minutes to warm through.

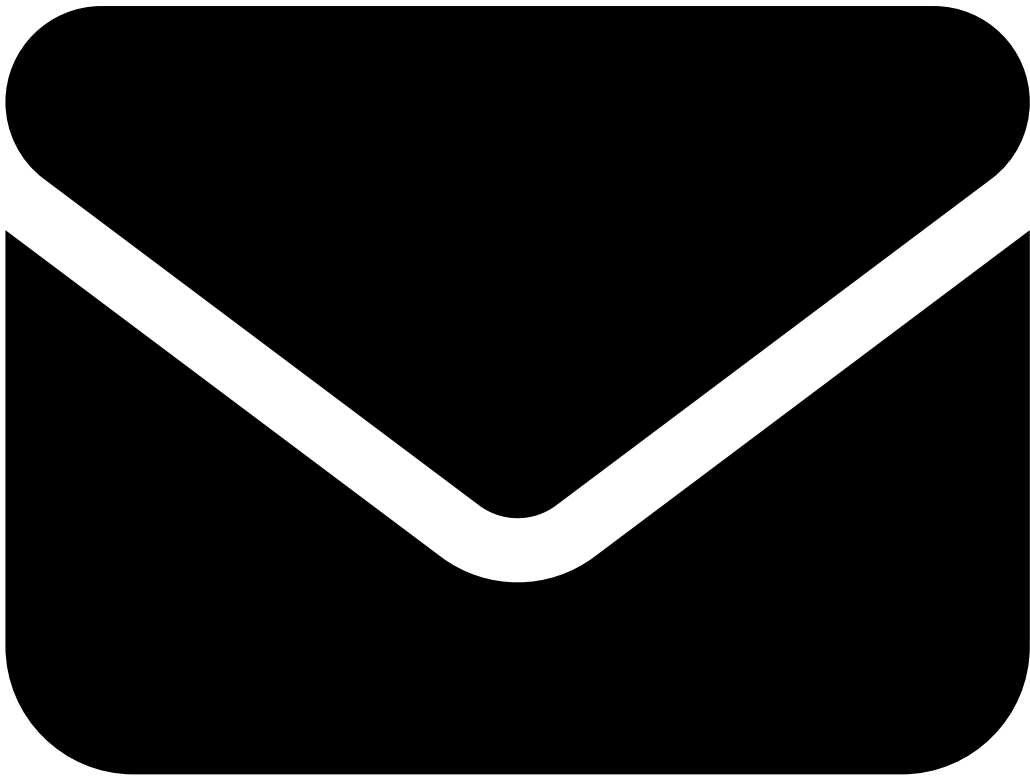
Garnish with parsley and serve with lemon wedges

Spicy Italian Sausage Gnocchi Soup

Spicy Italian Sausage Gnocchi Soup

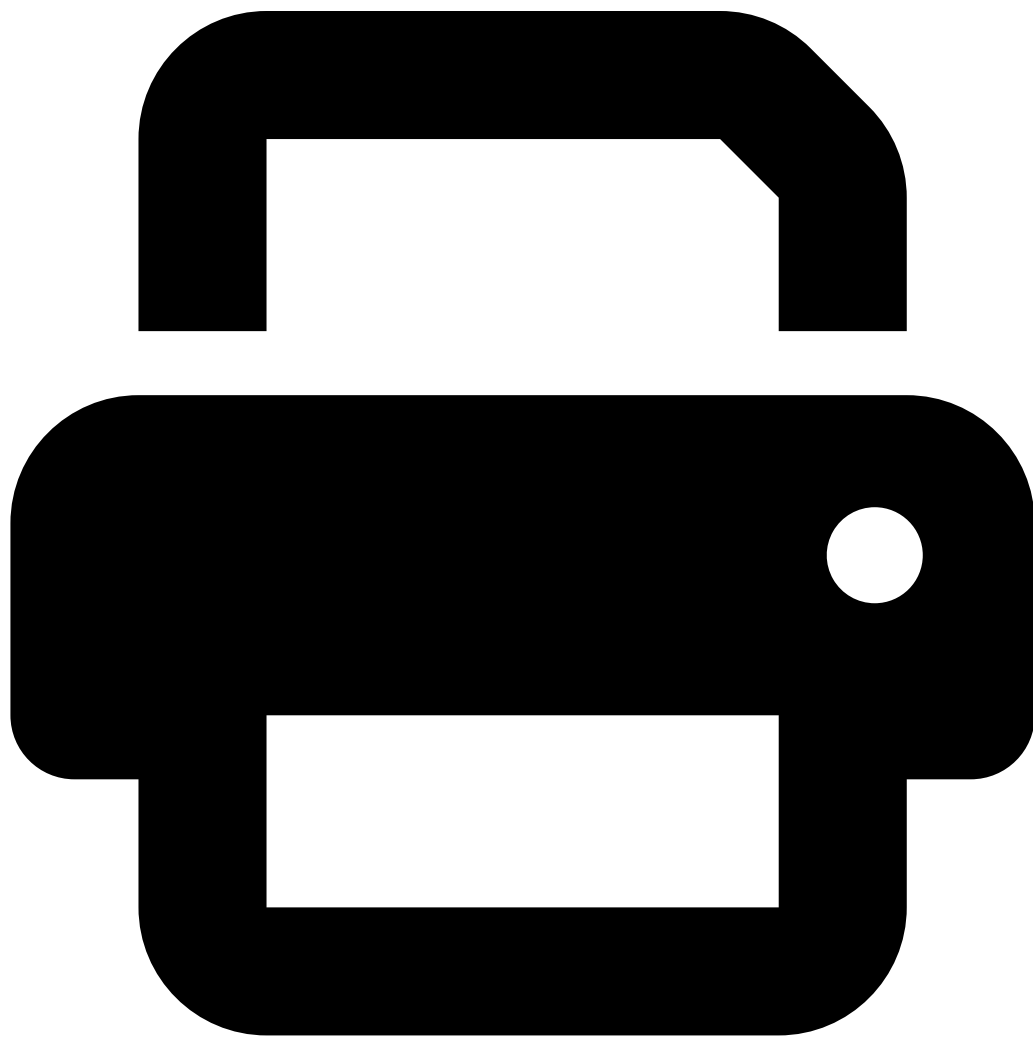
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There's something deeply comforting about a big bowl of soup, and when you add pillowy gnocchi and spicy Italian sausage, it becomes irresistible. For this recipe, you can take the extra step and make **homemade gnocchi**, soft little pillows that melt in your mouth, or save time with **store-bought gnocchi**—both work beautifully. The key is a flavorful, savory broth with tender vegetables and just the right amount of heat from the sausage and red pepper flakes. Whether you make the gnocchi from scratch or go the easy route, this soup is cozy, hearty, and perfect for any day you need a little Italian comfort.

Things to know about this Spicy Italian Sausage Gnocchi Soup

- **Homemade vs. Store-Bought Gnocchi** – Fresh gnocchi makes the soup extra luxurious and tender, but store-bought gnocchi is a huge time-saver without sacrificing flavor.

- **Spice Level** – The sausage brings heat naturally, but you can adjust the spiciness with red pepper flakes to suit your taste.
- **Vegetable Options** – Carrots, celery, and spinach are classic, but feel free to add zucchini, kale, or even roasted red peppers for extra flavor and color.
- **Make-Ahead Tip** – The soup can be made a day ahead; just store gnocchi separately and add it right before serving to prevent it from getting mushy.
- **Storage & Reheating** – Keep leftovers in an airtight container in the fridge for 2–3 days. Reheat gently on the stove, adding a splash of broth if needed.
- **Garnish Ideas** – Finish with freshly grated Parmesan, a drizzle of good olive oil, or fresh basil for a restaurant-style touch.
- **Perfect Comfort Food** – This soup is hearty enough for a meal on its own, making it ideal for chilly nights, casual dinners, or feeding a crowd.
- **Want to make this soup extra special?** Try using homemade potato gnocchi! Check out my **easy 4-ingredient potato gnocchi recipe [here]** and elevate your Spicy Italian Sausage Gnocchi Soup to the next level.

Spicy Italian Sausage Gnocchi Soup



- 1 pound spicy Italian sausage (casings removed)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion (diced)
- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 2 medium carrots (diced)
- 2 celery stalks (diced)
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional, for extra heat)
- 6 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1 pound potato gnocchi (store-bought or homemade)
- 3 cups baby spinach or kale (chopped)
- 2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- Salt and black pepper (to taste)

1. In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add sausage, breaking it apart, and cook until browned.
2. Add onion, garlic, carrots, and celery. Cook until softened. Stir in red pepper flakes and Italian seasoning.
3. Pour in broth and diced tomatoes. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer for 15–20 minutes.
4. Add gnocchi and cook according to package instructions until tender.
5. Stir in spinach or kale until wilted. Season with salt and black pepper to taste.
6. Serve hot, garnished with parmesan cheese