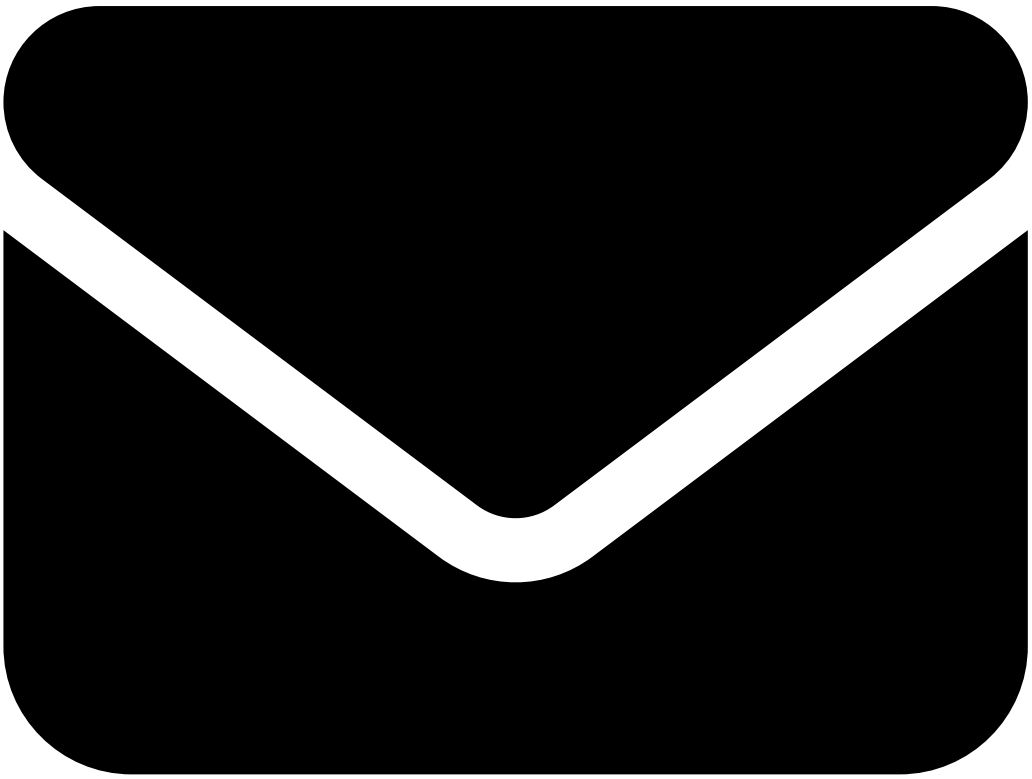
Butternut Squash Gnocchi with Gorgonzola

Butternut Squash Gnocchi with Gorgonzola

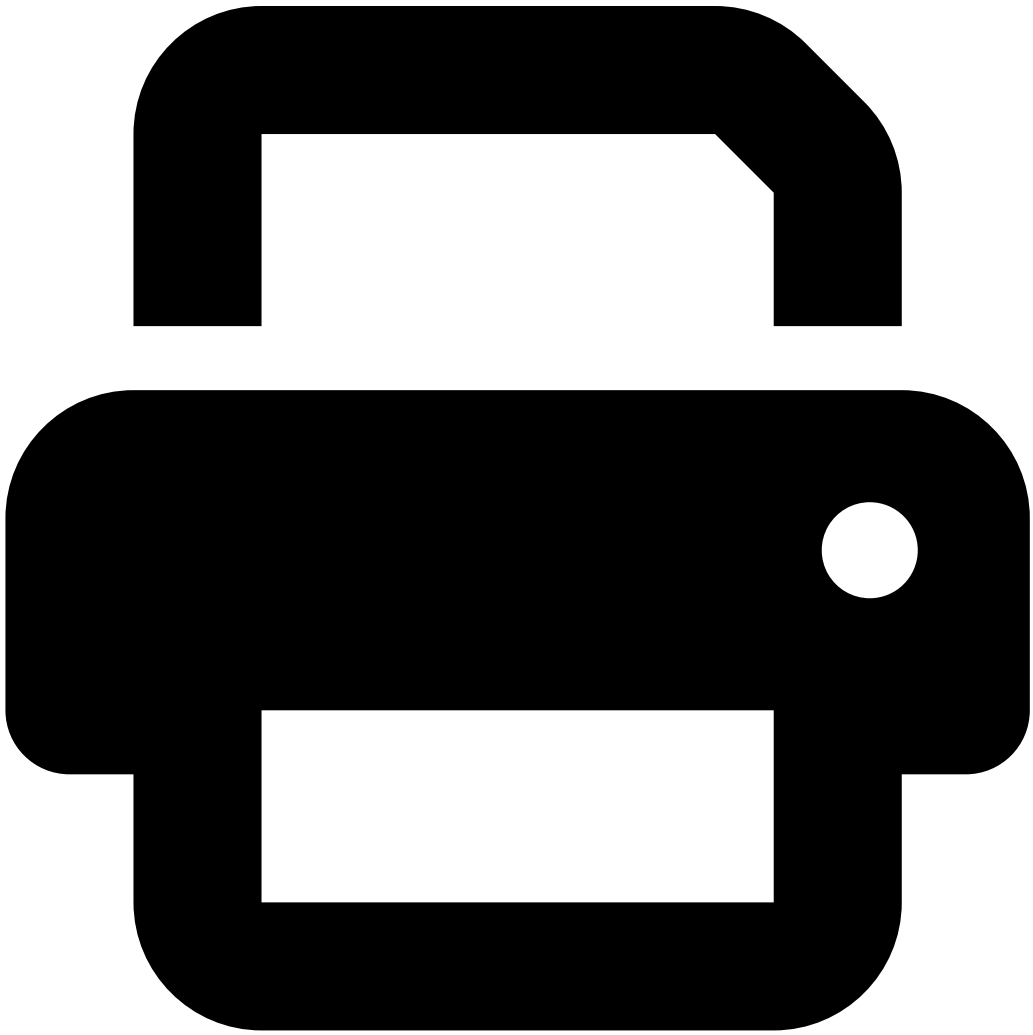
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SMS



Fall is in the air, and nothing says cozy quite like roasted butternut squash gnocchi. This recipe combines the sweetness of roasted butternut squash with delicate soft gnocchi, perfect for pairing with creamy gorgonzola sauce.
It’s no wonder most Italian restaurants have gnocchi on the menu. Most home cooks are intimated by making gnocchi at home. I am here to tell you you don’t have to be.

Making homemade gnocchi is a lot easier than you think. The most challenging part is getting the dough to the right consistency to produce the soft light gnocchi dumplings. This make take a few attempts, and that’s okay. After a few tries you will be making gnocchi like a pro.

Whether you’re new to making gnocchi or a seasoned pro , this easy to follow recipe is bound to become a favorite.

Things to know about this Butternut Squash Gnocchi with Gorgonzola”

1. Butternut squash is a seasonal fall vegetable, bringing a natural sweetness to the gnocchi that pairs well with many sauces.
2. These gnocchi are easy to make. This recipe simplifies the process. making it a beginner friendly gnocchi recipe
3. The recipe is versatile pair the gnocchi with a browned butter and sage, marinara or a creamy pancetta gorgonzola sauce like I did. If you would like the recipe for the sauce I used let me know, if I should write a blog post.
4. This recipe is perfect for meal prep. These gnocchi are freezer friendly, so you can a batch in advance to enjoy anytime, or make a double batch one for now and one for later.
5. As always , please let met know if you make this easy roasted butternut squash gnocchi recipe. I love hearing from you. And it helps others. THANKS!!!
6. **Warm up this fall with these cozy Italian dishes:**

    - **Creamy Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto** – rich, earthy, and perfect for chilly evenings.
    - **Italian-Style Cabbage Rolls** – hearty, satisfying, and full of fall flavors.

Don’t forget to save this Butternut Squash Gnocchi recipe—it’s the ultimate cozy fall dinner!

Butternut Squash Gnocchi with Gorgonzola



Tender butternut squash gnocchi are tossed in a creamy Gorgonzola sauce for a rich, comforting Italian-inspired meal. Finished with fresh sage and toasted walnuts, this elegant pasta is perfect for cozy dinners and special occasions.

For the Gnocchi

- 2-3 cups roasted and mashed butternut squash (about 1 medium squash)
- 1-1½ cups all-purpose flour (start with 1 cup and add more as needed)
- 1 egg
- ½ cup parmesan cheese
- salt and pepper to taste
- A pinch of Nutmeg

For the Gorgonzola Cream Sauce

- 1 cup heavy cream
- 4 oz Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 2-3 oz pancetta, diced
- 1 small shallot, finely minced (optional)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Pinch of nutmeg
- Chopped parsley

1. Roast the Squash. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Cut the squash in half, remove seeds, and roast cut-side down until tender (about 30–35 minutes). Scoop out the flesh and mash it, letting excess moisture evaporate.

2. Make the Gnocchi Dough. In a bowl, combine the mashed squash, egg, salt, and nutmeg. Gradually add 1 cup of flour, mixing gently until a soft dough forms. Add more flour as needed—dough should be slightly sticky but workable. let rest covered on the counter 30 minutes

3. Once your gnocchi dough is ready, lightly flour your work surface and divide the dough into manageable portions. Gently roll each piece into a long rope, about ¾-inch thick, then cut into small, bite-sized pillows. To create the traditional ridges, roll each piece over a floured gnocchi board or the back of a fork, using your thumb to gently press and roll the dough. Place the shaped gnocchi on a lightly floured baking sheet, making sure they don't touch, until ready to cook.

4. Cook the Gnocchi. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook gnocchi in batches until they float (about 2–3 minutes). Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.

5. Make the Gorgonzola Cream Sauce. In a skillet, melt the butter over medium heat cook diced pancetta until crisp. Remove and set aside. Sauté shallots until soft and translucent lower the heat, stir in cream until warm but not boiling. Add Gorgonzola in small pieces, stirring until smooth. Season with salt, pepper, and a pinch of nutmeg. Stir the crispy pancetta back into the sauce.

6. Combine and Serve. Toss the cooked gnocchi gently in the sauce until coated. Serve immediately, garnished with Freshly chopped Italian parsley

Storage Instructions

Uncooked Gnocchi:

Place gnocchi on a floured baking sheet in a single layer. Freeze for 1–2 hours, then transfer to a freezer-safe bag or container.

Cook from frozen in boiling salted water; they will float when done.

Cooked Gnocchi with Sauce:

Store leftover gnocchi and sauce separately in airtight containers in the fridge for up to 3 days.

Reheat gently in a skillet over low heat, adding a splash of cream or milk if needed to loosen the sauce.

1.
   The secret to light, tender gnocchi is using as little flour as possible. Make sure your roasted butternut squash puree is well dried and completely cooled before mixing the dough. Avoid overworking it, and always cook one test gnocchi before shaping the entire batch. If it falls apart, gently work a little more flour into the dough.

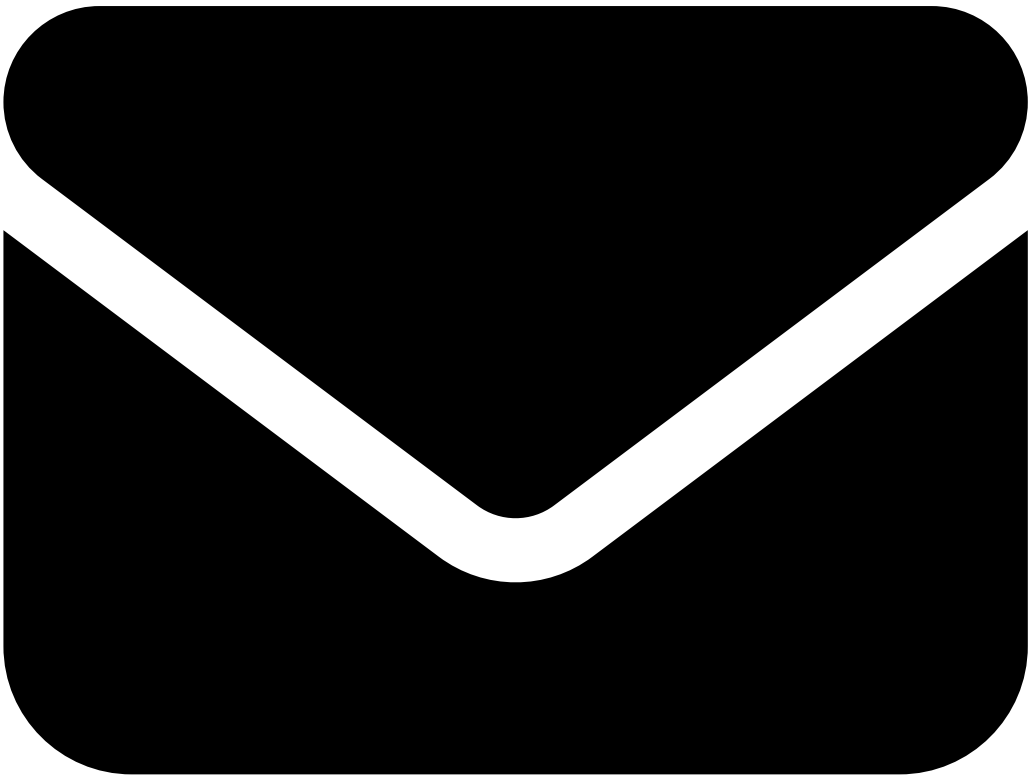
Main Course
Italian
butternut squash gnocchi with Gorgonzola

Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad

Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad

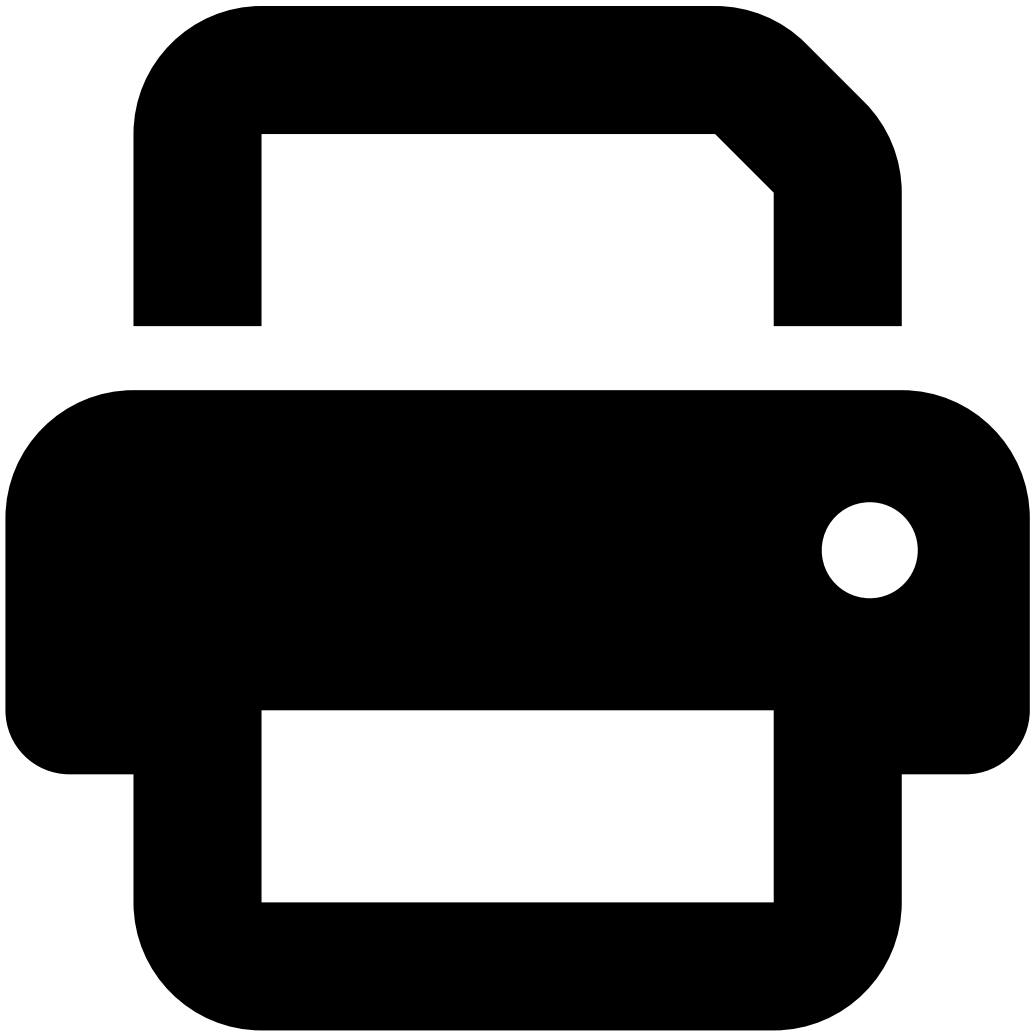
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There’s something about the combination of fresh green beans and tender potatoes that always takes me back to family gatherings and summer cookouts. This Italian-style salad is a dish I grew up eating, especially when green beans were plentiful in the garden and new potatoes were just dug up. Unlike creamy American-style potato salad, this version is light, bright, and dressed simply with olive oil, vinegar, garlic, and herbs. It’s rustic, refreshing, and full of flavor — the kind of dish that tastes even better after it sits for a little while and the flavors have had a chance to mingle.

What I love most about this salad is its versatility. It’s not just for summer picnics — it’s perfect anytime of the year. In warmer months, it shines as a light side dish for grilled meats or seafood, while in cooler months, it pairs beautifully with roasted chicken, baked fish, or even a cozy Sunday roast.

Things to know about this Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad

This salad tastes even better after a few hours in the fridge. The potatoes soak up the garlicky vinaigrette, and the green beans keep their crunch. Since it’s made without mayo, it’s perfect for picnics and potlucks, and it’s just as welcome in the middle of summer as it is on a chilly autumn or winter day.

Variations to Try:

- Add a handful of kalamata or green olives for a briny bite.
- Make it heartier with canned tuna or sliced hard-boiled eggs.
- Swap the parsley for fresh basil or mint.
- Use fresh lemon juice instead of vinegar for a brighter flavor.

Love this recipe? Be sure to check out my other Italian-inspired sides like **Italian crispy roasted potatoes** or Fuyu Persimmon Walnut Salad.

Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad



This Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad is a fresh, flavorful side dish made with tender potatoes, crisp green beans, red onion, and a simple olive oil, garlic, and herb dressing. Served warm or chilled, it's perfect for barbecues, potlucks, holidays, or everyday family dinners.

- 4 cups potatoes (red or Yukon gold), cute in medium dice
- 1 Lb. fresh green beans, trimmed
- 1 cup red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard (optional, for extra tang)
- 2 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes (adjust to taste)
- 2 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1. **Cook the potatoes**

   Place the potatoes in a large pot of salted water. Bring to a boil and cook until just fork-tender, about 12–15 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove the potatoes and set aside, keeping the cooking water in the pot.

2. **Cook the green beans**

   In the same pot of boiling water, add the trimmed green beans and cook for 3–4 minutes, until bright green and tender-crisp. Drain and plunge into a bowl of ice water

to stop the cooking. Drain again.

3. **Make the dressing**

   In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, garlic, mustard (if using), oregano, salt, and pepper.

4. **Assemble the salad**

   In a large serving bowl, combine the potatoes, green beans, and sliced red onion. Pour the dressing over the top and toss gently to coat.

5. **Finish & serve**

   Sprinkle with chopped parsley and adjust seasoning with more salt, pepper, or vinegar to taste. Serve warm, at room temperature, or chilled.

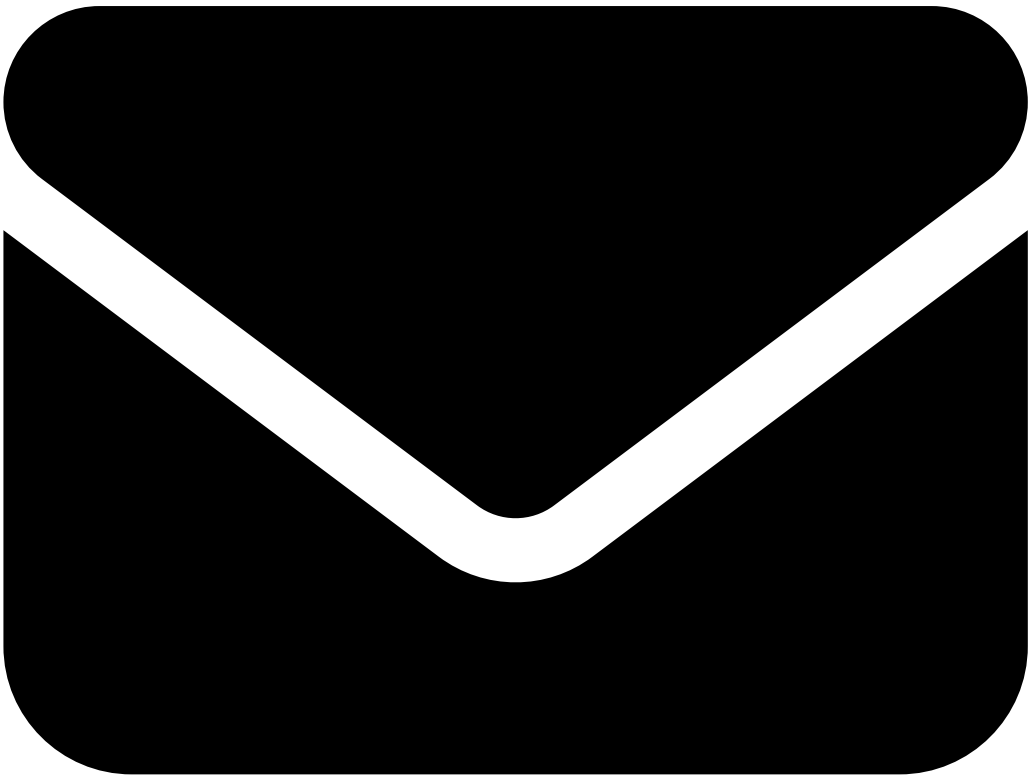
Side Dish
Italian
Italian green beans and potato salad,

Butternut Squash Lasagna

Butternut Squash Lasagna

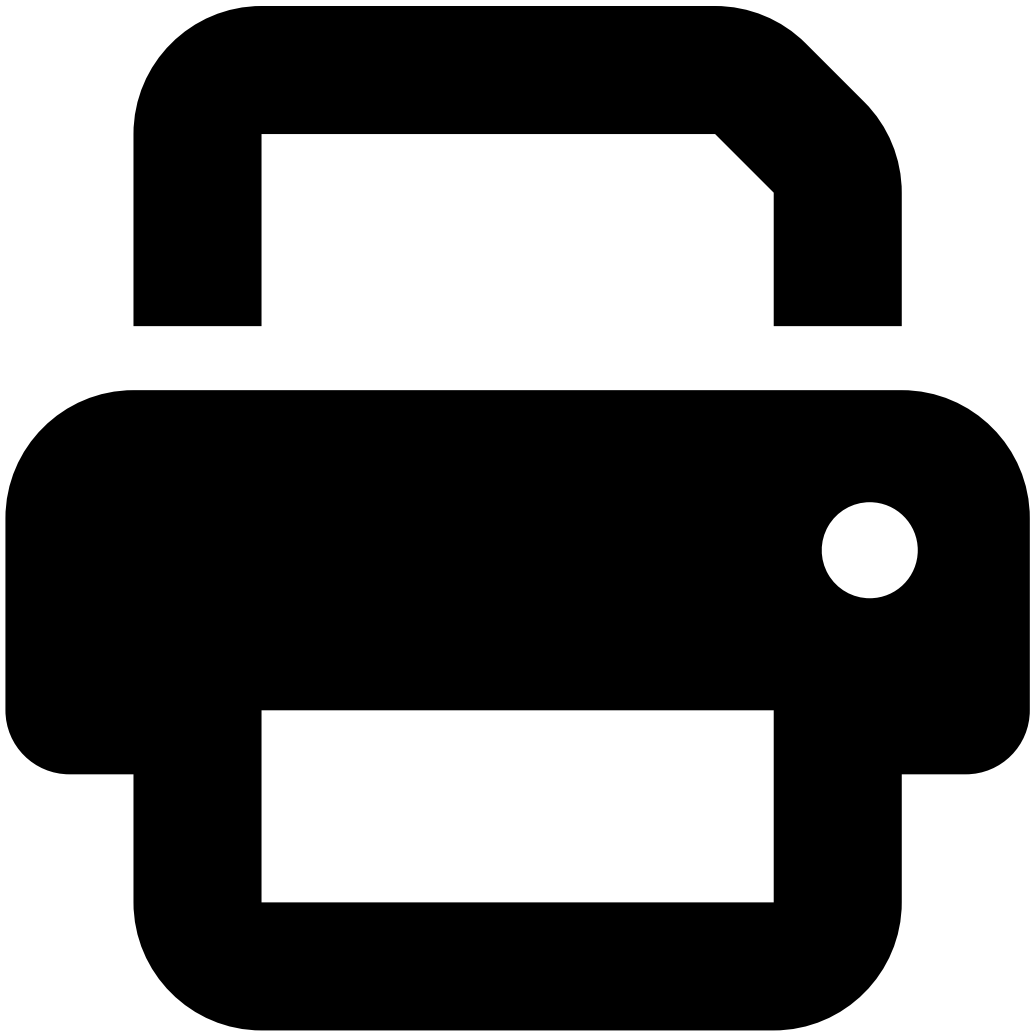
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Fall has always been my favorite time of year. There’s just something about the crisp air, the changing leaves, and the way the kitchen feels cozier when something warm is baking in the oven. I especially love cooking with fall produce, and butternut squash is always at the top of my list. It’s naturally sweet, roasts up beautifully, and makes the creamiest base for so many comforting dishes. This butternut squash lasagna is one of my favorites—it’s layered with roasted squash, creamy ricotta, and plenty of cheese for the ultimate cozy dinner. It’s the kind of meal that’s perfect for a Sunday dinner with family or sharing around the table with friends

Things to know about this butternut squash lasagna

- **Make-Ahead:** You can assemble the lasagna a day ahead, cover it tightly with foil, and refrigerate until ready

to bake. Just add 10–15 extra minutes to the baking time.

- **Freezer Option:** This lasagna freezes beautifully! Bake it, let it cool completely, then wrap well and freeze for up to 3 months. Reheat covered at 350°F until warmed through.
- **Cheese Swaps:** Ricotta is classic, but you can use cottage cheese for extra protein, or add fontina or Gruyère for a richer flavor.
- **Shortcuts:** Save time by buying pre-cut butternut squash or even frozen squash. No-boil lasagna noodles also make this recipe easier.
- **Add a Protein:** If you'd like, layer in Italian sausage, pancetta, or shredded chicken for a heartier version.
- And if you want to take this lasagna to the next level, try it with my **Easy Béchamel Sauce** recipe. It's quick to make and adds that extra creamy layer that makes this dish irresistible.
- **Serving Tip:** This lasagna pairs beautifully with a simple green salad and crusty bread for a complete fall dinner.

More Cozy Recipes to Try

If you love this Butternut Squash Lasagna, here are a few more comforting recipes you might enjoy:

- Classic Italian Wedding Soup – another hearty fall favorite.
- Creamy Butternut Squash Pasta with Gorgonzola – a quick 20-minute dinner with the same fall flavors.
- Italian Roasted Sausage, Potatoes, and Peppers –

a cozy sheet pan dinner that’s always a hit.

- Escarole and Beans with Italian Sausage – rustic, simple, and perfect with crusty bread.

Butternut Squash Lasagna



- 1 medium butternut squash (about 2 ½–3 lbs.), peeled, seeded, and cubed
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp fresh thyme (or ½ tsp dried)
- 1 tsp fresh sage, chopped (or ½ tsp dried)
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- 1 arge egg
- 1½ cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 cups béchamel (homemade or store-bought)
- 9 lasagna noodles (no-boil or cooked)
- ½ tsp red pepper flakes for heat, crispy sage leaves for garnish (optional)

1. **Roast the Squash.**

   Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Toss squash cubes with

olive oil, garlic, thyme, sage, salt, and pepper. Spread on a baking sheet and roast for 25–30 minutes, until soft and caramelized. Mash lightly with a fork (leave a few chunks for texture).

2. **Prepare the Cheese Mixture.** In a bowl, mix ricotta, egg, ½ cup mozzarella, ¼ cup Parmesan, salt, and pepper.

3. **Assemble the Lasagna.** Spread a thin layer of béchamel on the bottom of a 9×13-inch baking dish. Add noodles, a layer of mashed squash, dollops of ricotta mixture, a drizzle of béchamel, and a sprinkle of mozzarella. Repeat layers (about 3 total), finishing with noodles topped with béchamel, mozzarella, and remaining Parmesan.

4. **Bake.** Cover with foil and bake at 375°F (190°C) for 25 minutes. Remove foil and bake another 15–20 minutes until golden and bubbling. Let rest for 10 minutes before slicing.

5. **Serve.** Garnish with crispy sage leaves or extra Parmesan.

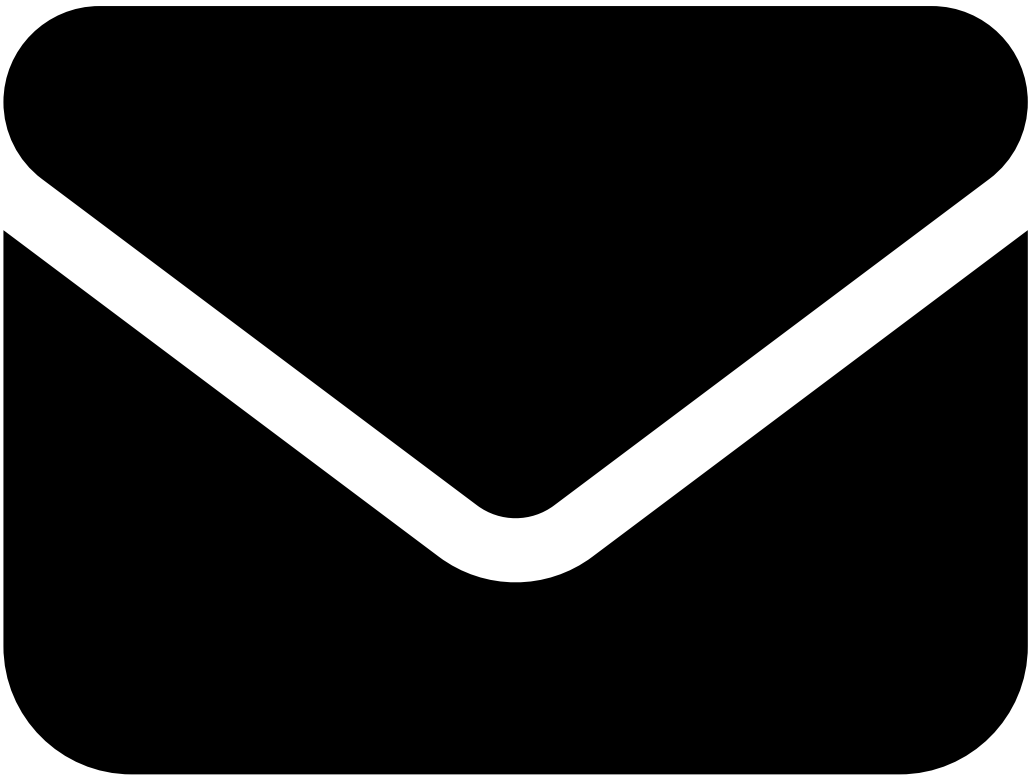
Creamy Butternut Squash Risotto with Arborio

Creamy Butternut Squash Risotto with Arborio”

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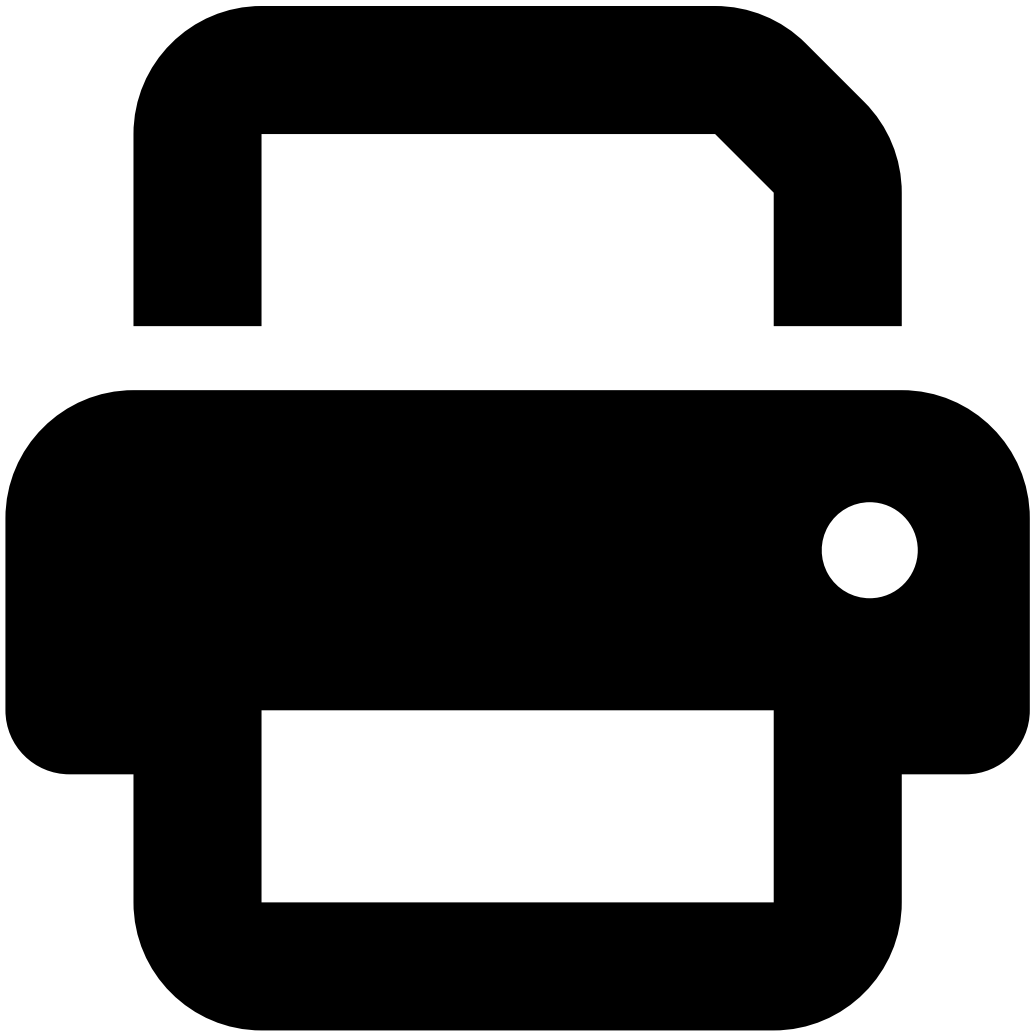









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It’s no surprise most Italian restaurants have risotto on their menu, it seems too complicated for the home cook. Am here to tell you it’s not complicated at all. This creamy butternut squash risotto with arborio was a restaurant menu favorite, it’s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



Creamy Butternut Squash Risotto is a comforting Italian-inspired dish made with creamy roasted butternut squash, Arborio rice, Parmesan cheese, and a touch of fresh herbs. The slow addition of warm broth creates the signature creamy texture of a classic risotto—perfect for a cozy fall or winter meal.

- 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!!

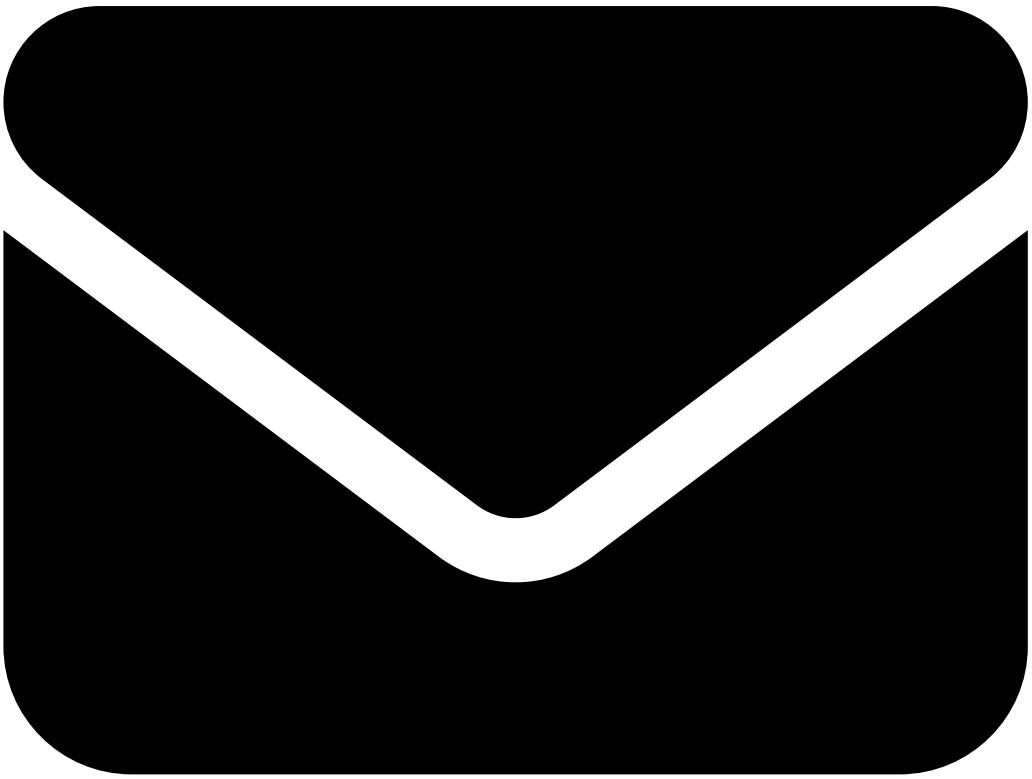
Main Course
Italian
creamy butternut squash risotto, Arborio rice,

Italian Crispy roasted Potatoes

Italian Crispy roasted Potatoes

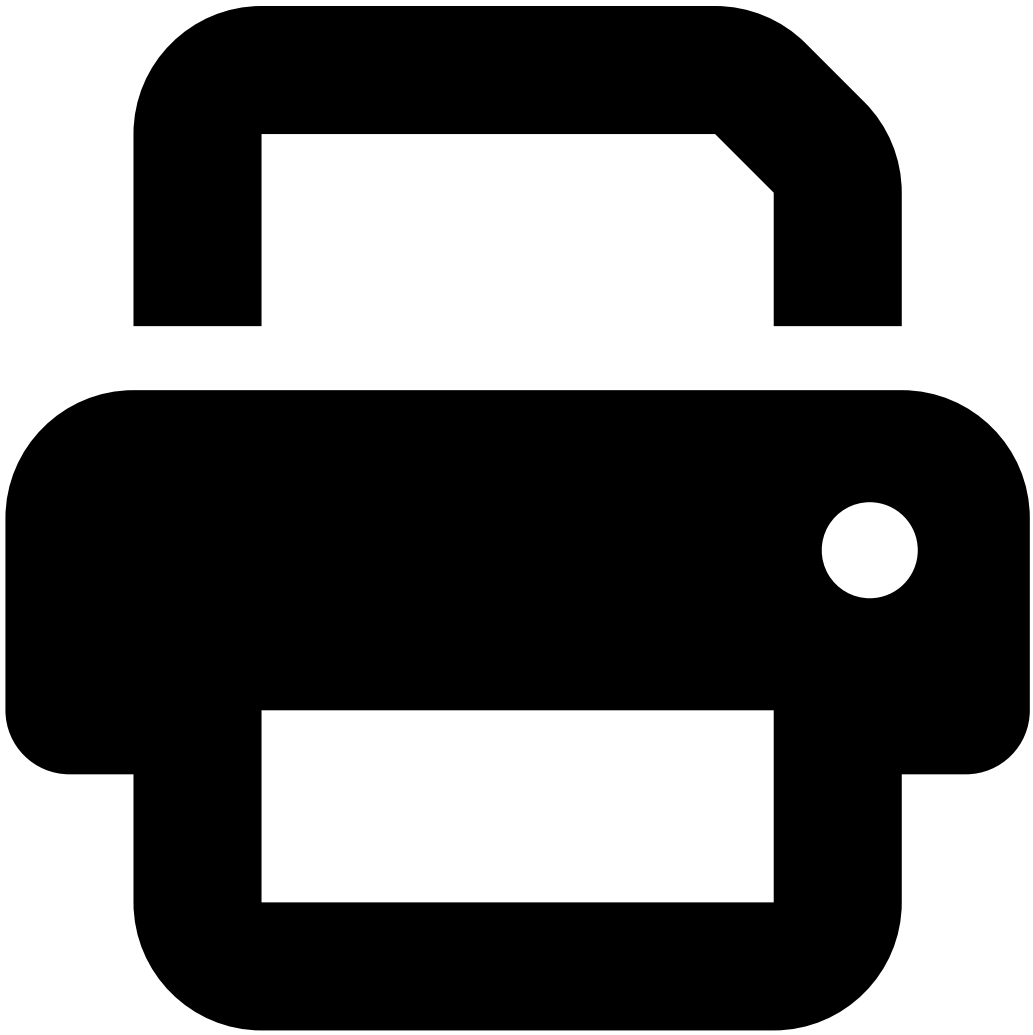
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These **Italian crispy roasted potatoes** are straight from my mother’s kitchen. She’d parboil them, toss with olive oil, garlic, rosemary, and a little lemon, then roast until golden and crunchy. Simple, comforting, and always the first thing to disappear 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

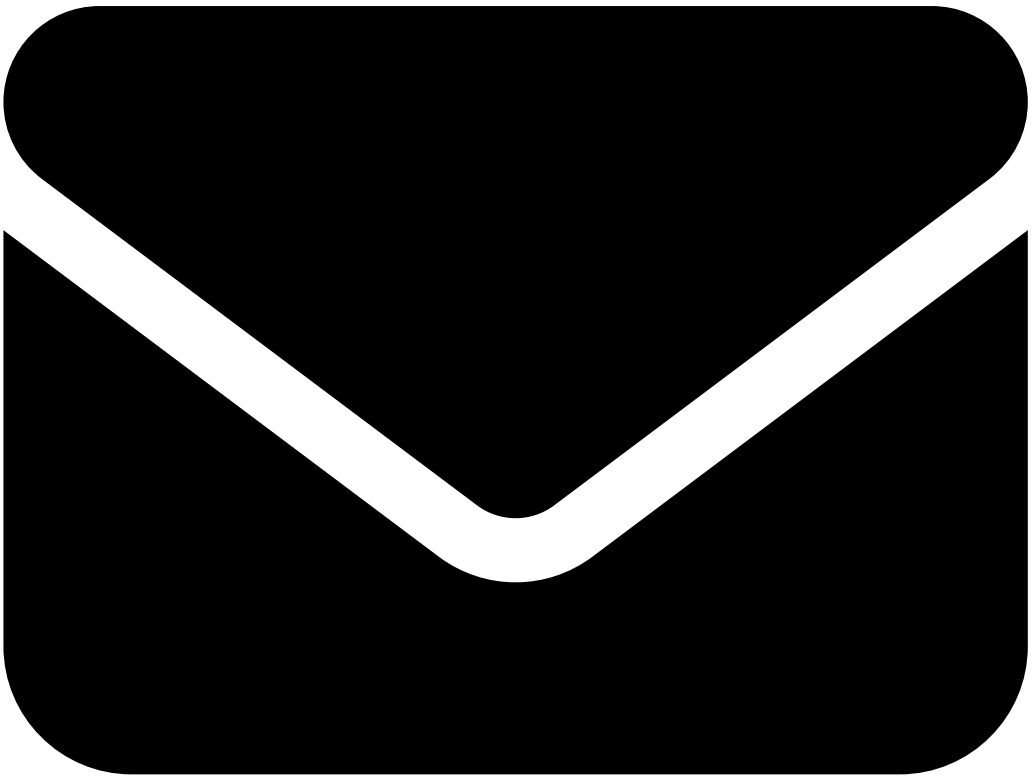
Sugo Crudo – No-Cook Italian Tomato Sauce

Sugo Crudo – No-Cook Italian Tomato Sauce

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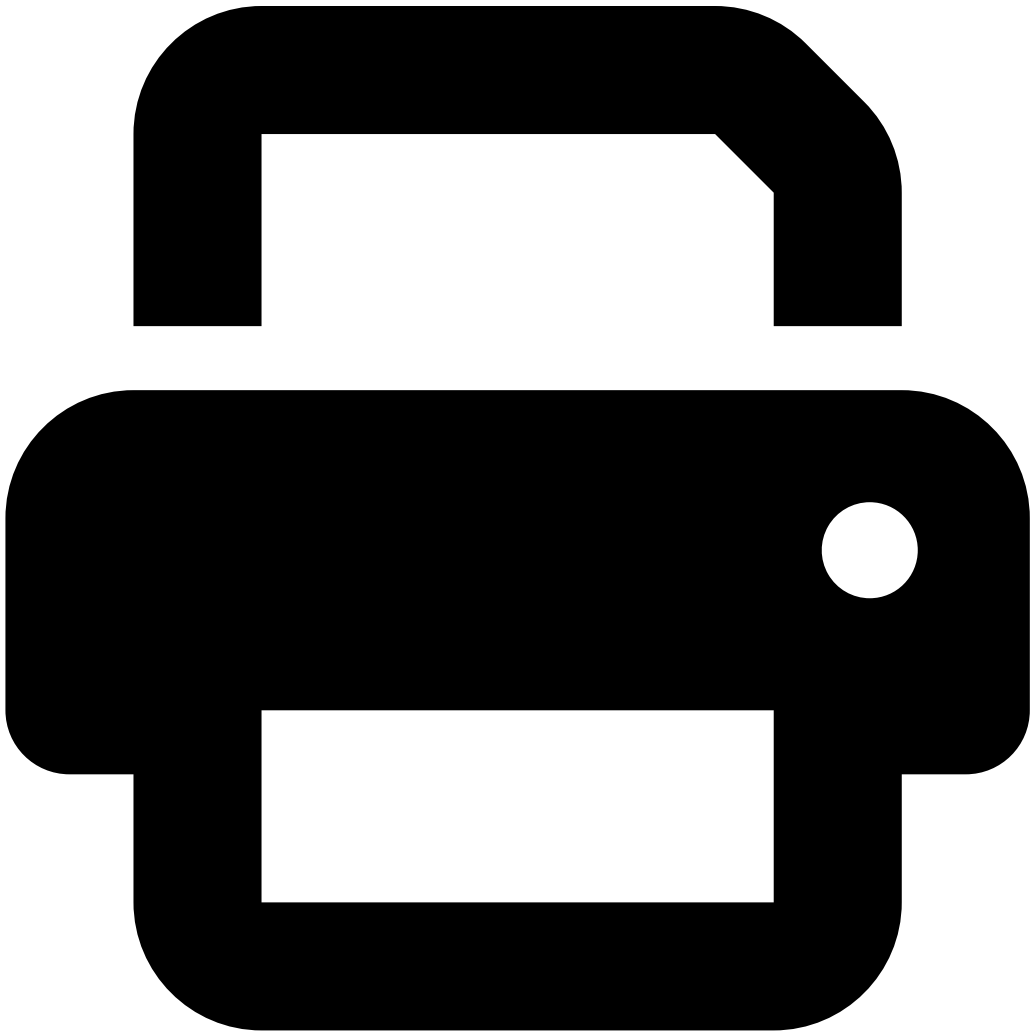
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In Italy, *sugo crudo* – meaning “raw sauce” – is a summertime favorite that captures the very essence of fresh, ripe tomatoes. Sweet, juicy tomatoes are paired with fragrant basil, garlic, and rich extra virgin olive oil for a pasta dish that’s as simple as it is unforgettable. Best of all, it’s ready in the time it takes to cook your pasta.

While it’s a traditional dish often enjoyed during *Ferragosto* on August 15th, when families gather to celebrate the height of summer, it’s just as delicious any time you have sun-ripened tomatoes on hand. Light, vibrant, and bursting with flavor, it’s the perfect recipe for warm-weather dining – or for bringing a taste of summer to your table year-round.

Things to Know About Sugo Crudo

Use the ripest tomatoes: Since this is a no-cook sauce, the tomatoes are the star. Choose ripe, juicy, flavorful tomatoes for the best results. Fresh garden or farmers’ market tomatoes are especially good when they’re in season.

Let it rest: Don’t skip this simple step. Let the tomato mixture sit at room temperature for 15–30 minutes before tossing it with the pasta. This gives the garlic, basil, olive oil, and tomatoes time to meld together.

Choose a good olive oil: With so few ingredients, the flavor of your extra-virgin olive oil really matters. Use one that is fruity and flavorful rather than a neutral oil.

Adjust the flavor: Sugo Crudo is easy to customize. Add a pinch of red pepper flakes for a little heat or a bit more garlic if you love a stronger garlic flavor.

Toss with hot pasta: Cook the pasta until al dente, then toss it with the fresh sauce immediately before serving. The warmth of the pasta gently releases the flavors without cooking the fresh tomatoes.

Add fresh mozzarella: For an extra creamy touch, gently fold in small mozzarella pearls just before serving. The cool, creamy mozzarella pairs beautifully with the juicy tomatoes and fresh basil.

Classic Italian Sunday Meatball Sauce – Slow-simmered, rich, and perfect for hearty pasta nights.
Caprese spaghetti Roasted Tomato Sauce – Smoky, bold, and full of flavor for your next pasta dish.

Bring the taste of Italy to your table again and again!

Sugo Crudo – No-Cook Italian Tomato

Sauce



Sugo Crudo is a classic Italian raw tomato sauce made with ripe summer tomatoes, fresh basil, garlic, and extra virgin olive oil. Tossed with hot pasta, the heat gently warms the sauce, creating a light, vibrant dish that's bursting with fresh flavor. This authentic Italian recipe is quick, easy, and perfect for making the most of tomato season.

- 2 pounds ripe tomatoes (heirloom, cherry, or San Marzano)
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic (finely minced)
- ½ cup fresh basil leaves (torn)
- 1 teaspoon salt (plus more for pasta water)
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- 12 oz. pasta (your favorite short pasta shape)
- 1 cup mozzarella pearls or balls cut in half

1. **Prepare the tomatoes**

   Slice the tomatoes in half, remove most of the seeds, and chop into small pieces. For a smoother texture, pulse them briefly in a food processor.

2. **Mix the sauce**

   In a large mixing bowl, combine chopped tomatoes, fresh mozzerella garlic, basil, olive oil, salt, black pepper,

and red pepper flakes if using.

Stir gently, cover, and let rest at room temperature for 30 minutes while you cook the pasta.

3. **Cook the pasta**

   Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta until al dente according to package directions. Reserve ½ cup of the cooking water before draining.

4. **Bring it all together**

   Toss hot pasta with the sugo crudo, adding a splash of the reserved pasta water if needed to help the sauce coat the noodles.

5. **Serve immediately**

   Garnish with more basil and a drizzle of olive oil. Serve warm or at room temperature with crusty bread.

6. Tips for the Best Sugo Crudo

Tomatoes matter most – Use the ripest summer tomatoes you can find.

Let the sauce rest – This allows the garlic and basil to infuse the tomatoes.

Quality oil is key – Choose a fruity, rich extra virgin olive oil.

7. Serving Suggestion

Perfect for a light summer lunch with chilled white wine, a crisp salad, and bread for soaking up every drop.

Main Course

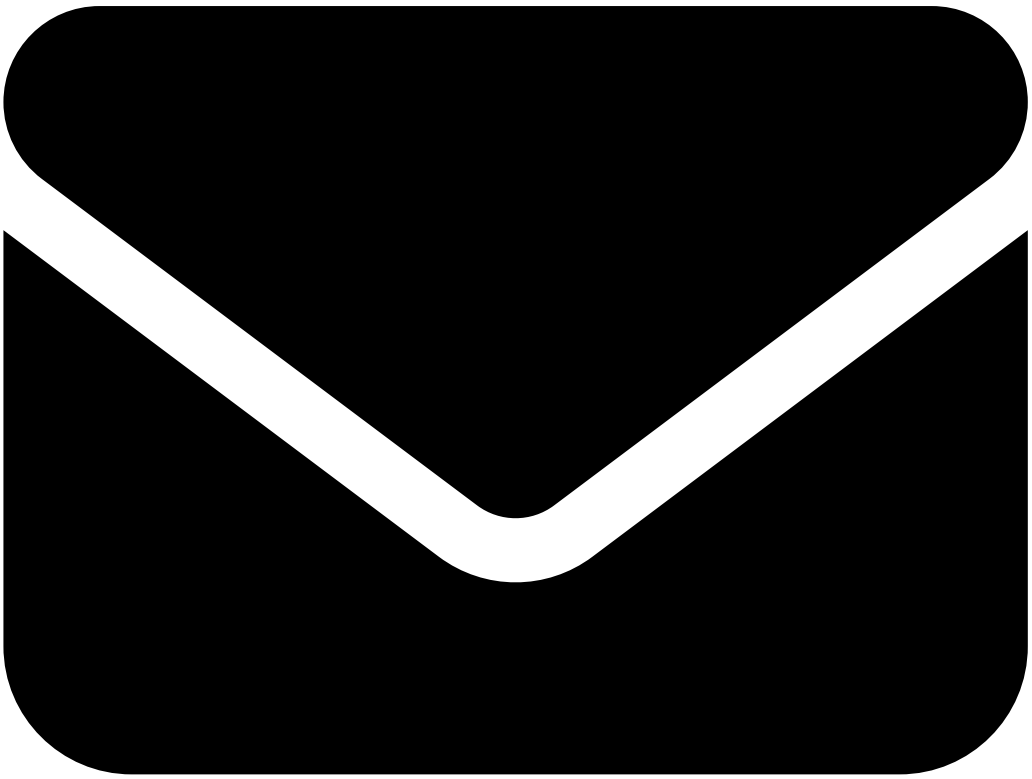
Italian

Peach Caprese Salad with Fresh Mozzarella

Peach Caprese Salad with Fresh Mozzarella

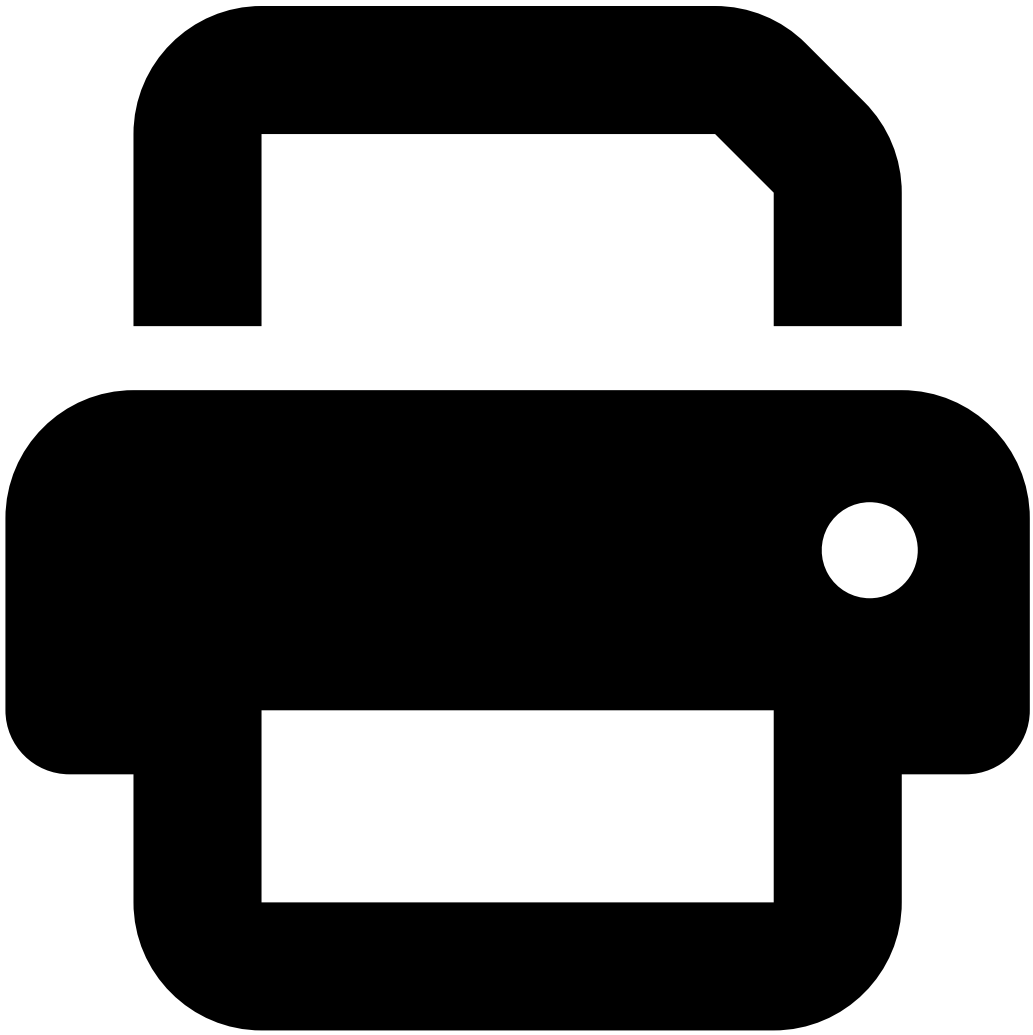
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When our peach tree bursts into sweet, golden fruit each summer, I can’t resist finding new ways to enjoy them. This **Peach caprese salad with Fresh Mozzarella** is my Italian-inspired twist on a caprese, swapping tomatoes for juicy peaches kissed by the grill. You don’t need your own peach tree to make it – just ripe, fragrant peaches from the market will do. The smoky char, creamy mozzarella, fragrant basil, and a drizzle of honey-balsamic-herb dressing make every bite taste like summer at its peak.

Things to know about this Peach Caprese Salad with Fresh Mozzarella

- **Peach selection matters.** Choose peaches that are ripe but still firm so they hold their shape on the grill without turning mushy. If peaches are too soft, grilling will make them fall apart.

- **No peach tree needed!** Even if you don’t have a backyard orchard like I do, fresh market peaches work beautifully for this recipe.
- **Grill carefully.** High heat is key for those beautiful char marks and smoky flavor, but keep an eye on the peaches so they don’t overcook. Two to three minutes per side usually does the trick.
- **Mozzarella or burrata?** Burrata adds extra creaminess and luxury, but fresh mozzarella is delicious, more affordable, and widely available.
- **Customize the dressing.** The honey-balsamic-herb dressing is sweet and tangy, but you can swap herbs to suit your taste — rosemary or basil would be lovely additions.
- **Make it a meal.** Add prosciutto slices or serve alongside grilled chicken for a heartier summer dinner
- **Loved this fresh summer salad?** Don’t miss these other seasonal favorites: Italian Amaretti stuffed summer peaches or creamy Italian street corn (no- mayo)

Grilled Peach Caprese Salad with fresh mozzarella



Sweet grilled peaches, creamy fresh mozzarella, and fresh basil come together in this easy Italian-inspired summer salad. Finished with extra-virgin olive oil and a simple balsamic drizzle, it’s a beautiful balance of sweet, creamy, and savory flavors.

- 4 ripe peaches (pitted and cut into medium thick slices)
- 8 oz fresh mozzarella pearls or slices cut
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes (halved (optional, but adds color and freshness))
- Fresh basil leaves (about 1/4 cup)
- Fresh mint or thyme (optional, for extra herb flavor)

For the Dressing:

- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar (or a good quality aged balsamic glaze)
- 1 teaspoon honey
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

1. Preheat your grill (or grill pan) to medium-high heat.
2. Prepare the peaches: Brush the peach halves lightly with olive oil. Place them cut-side down on the grill and cook for about 3-4 minutes until you get nice grill marks and the peaches are slightly softened. Remove and let cool slightly, then slice each half into 3-4 wedges.
3. Make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, balsamic vinegar, honey, salt, and pepper until emulsified.
4. Assemble the salad: On a serving plate, arrange the grilled peach slices, fresh mozzarella, and cherry tomatoes (if using). Scatter fresh basil and herbs over the top.
5. Drizzle the dressing evenly over the salad.
6. Optional: Add a light drizzle of extra honey over the top if you like it more sweet

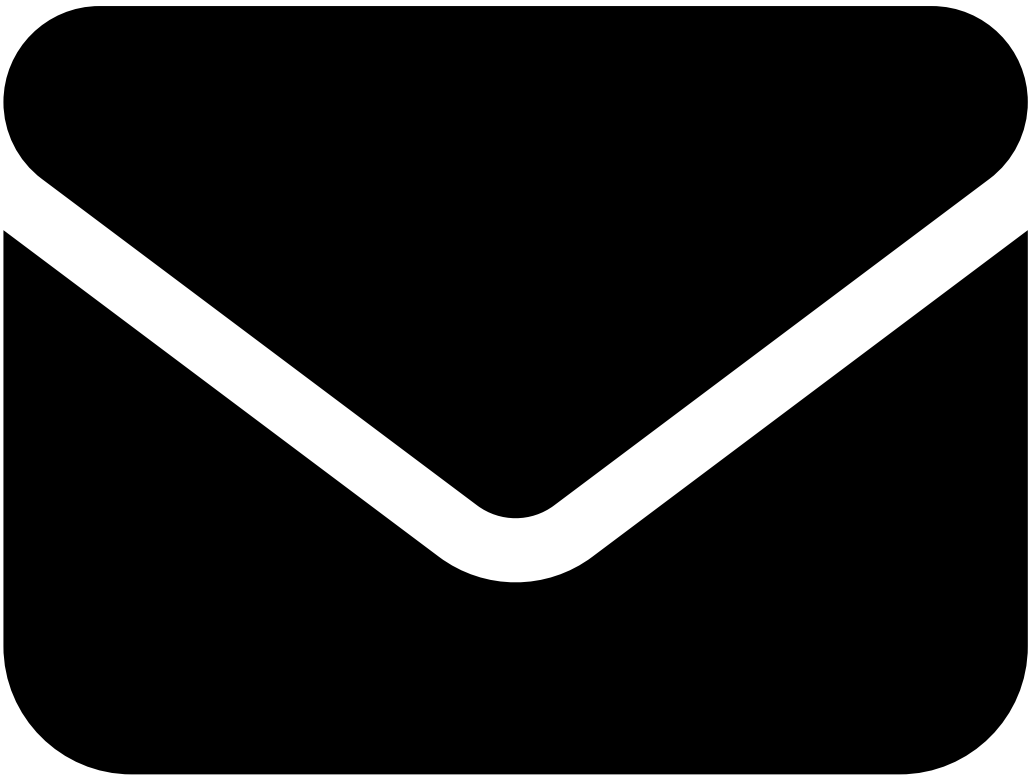
Salad
Italian

Crispy Italian Fried Cauliflower with Marinara

Crispy Italian Fried Cauliflower with Marinara

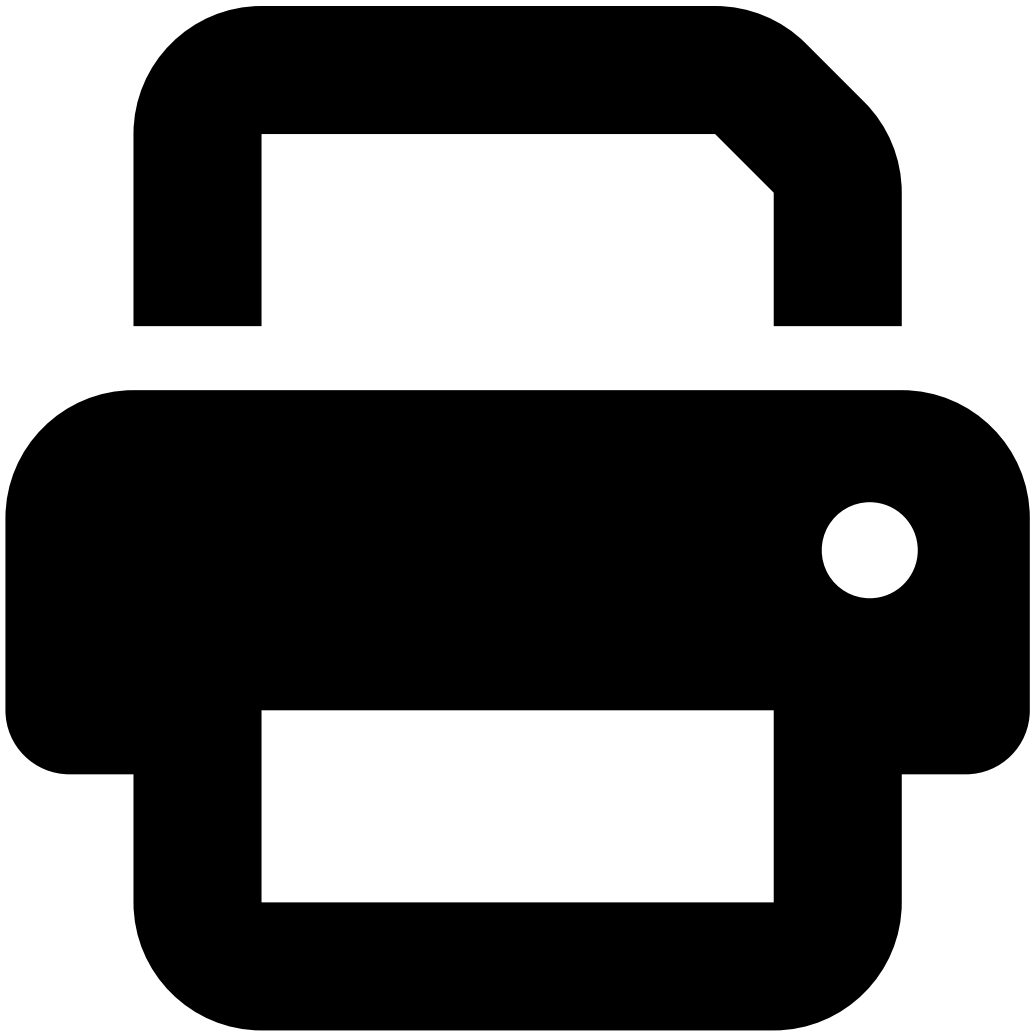
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In Italy, a **fritto misto** is all about sharing a platter of hot, golden, crispy bites—often a combination of vegetables, seafood, and other savory favorites. This **Crispy Italian Fried Cauliflower** takes inspiration from that tradition, turning humble cauliflower into an irresistible antipasto.

The cauliflower is quickly blanched in salted water so it stays tender inside, then dipped in a light garlic-and-herb batter and fried until beautifully crisp and golden. Serve it hot with warm marinara sauce for dipping, or add it to a larger Italian fried platter with zucchini, artichokes, or calamari. It’s simple, delicious, and made for sharing.

Things to Know About Crispy Italian

Fried Cauliflower with Marinara

Inspired by Italian fritto misto: This recipe takes inspiration from the Italian tradition of fritto misto, where vegetables and seafood are lightly coated and fried until golden. Cauliflower makes a wonderful addition to this style of antipasto.

Blanch the cauliflower first: A quick blanch in salted boiling water is an important step. It tenderizes the cauliflower so the inside cooks perfectly while the batter becomes crisp and golden in the hot oil.

Use cold sparkling water: Cold sparkling water gives the batter a lighter, airier texture. The bubbles help create that delicate crunch without making the coating heavy.

Season the batter well: Garlic powder, paprika, and Italian herbs add subtle flavor to the cauliflower without overpowering the marinara dipping sauce.

Don’t overcrowd the pan: Fry the cauliflower in batches so the oil stays hot and each piece has enough room to cook evenly. Overcrowding can result in a heavier, less crisp coating.

For a full Italian-inspired spread, pair it with my Shrimp Oreganata or Spinach Ricotta Balls

Crispy Cauliflower Batter Recipe



Crispy cauliflower batter recipe featuring tender cauliflower coated in a light, golden, and crunchy Italian-style batter. A delicious vegetarian appetizer, side dish, or snack that is easy to make and full of flavor.

- 1 medium head cauliflower
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup cornstarch (for extra crispiness)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika (or regular paprika)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup cold sparkling water (or more, as needed)
- Optional: pinch of cayenne pepper or chili flakes for heat
- olive oil for frying

1. Prep the cauliflower:
2. Cut 1 medium head of cauliflower into florets. Rinse and pat dry thoroughly.
3. Blanch the cauliflower:
4. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the cauliflower florets and cook for 2–3 minutes, just until slightly tender but still firm. Drain well and pat completely dry with paper towels.
5. Make the batter:
6. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, baking powder, salt, and spices. Slowly add the cold

sparkling water, whisking until smooth. The batter should be thick enough to coat the florets but still drip slightly – like pancake batter.

7. Coat the florets:
8. Dip each floret into the batter, letting any excess drip off.
9. **Fry or bake**:

   To fry: Heat the oil to 350°F (175°C). Fry florets in batches for 3–5 minutes, or until golden and crispy. Drain on paper towels.

   To bake: Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment. Place battered florets on the sheet and spray with oil. Bake for 25–30 minutes, flipping halfway, until golden and crisp.

Appetizer
Italian
crispy cauliflower

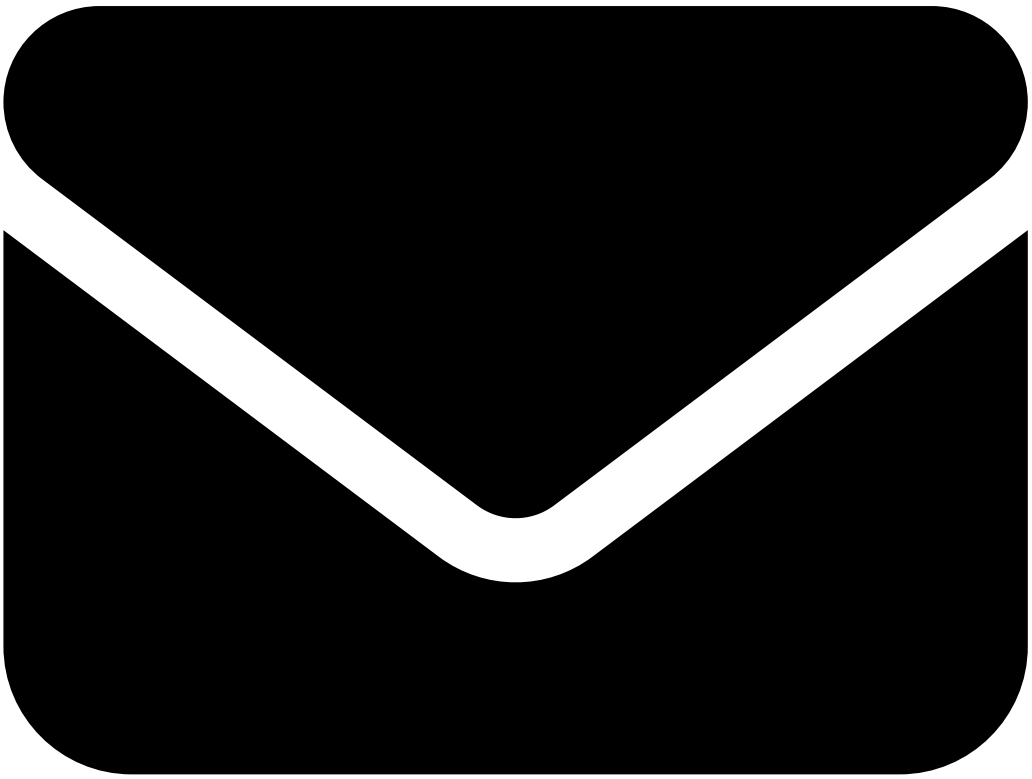
Tuscan roasted Tomato & Eggplant Soup

Tuscan roasted Tomato & Eggplant Soup

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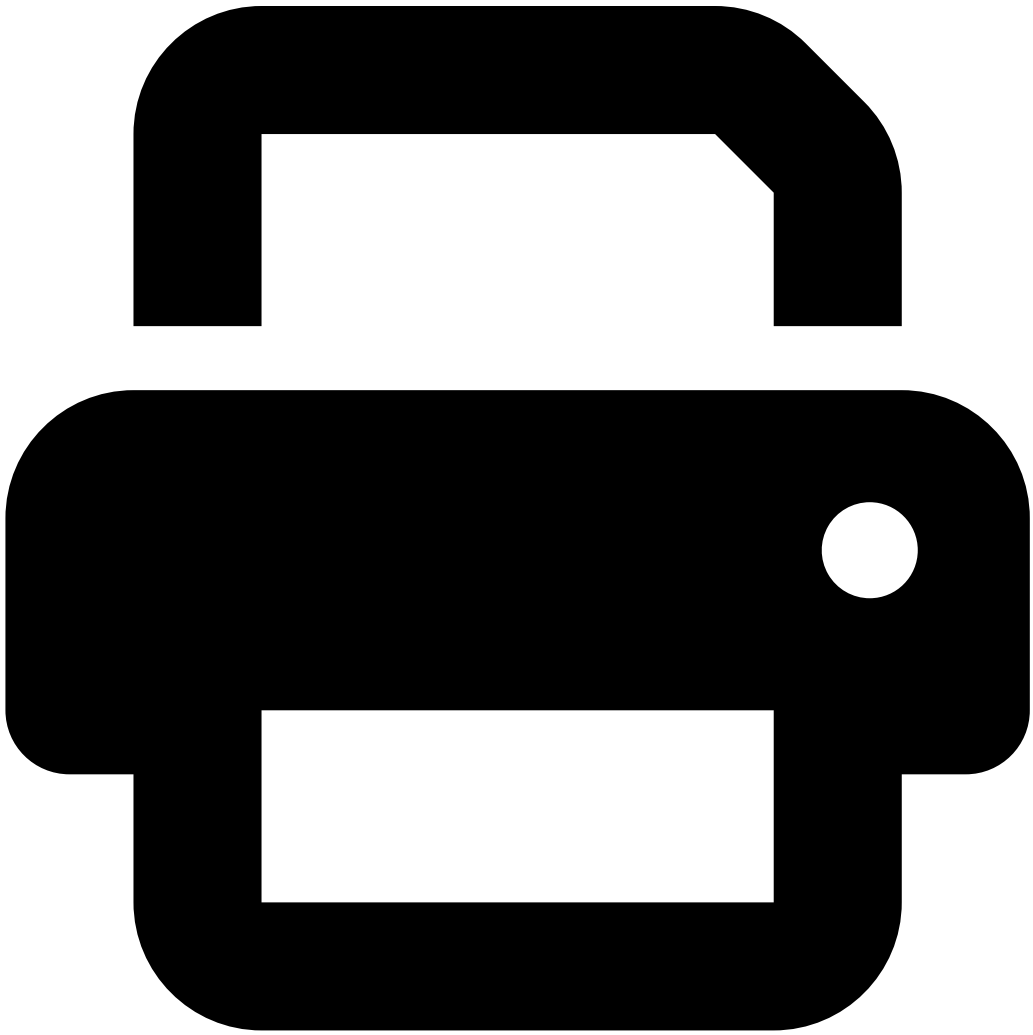
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There’s something special about making a meal with vegetables you’ve grown yourself. This **Tuscan Roasted Tomato & Eggplant Soup** came together with ingredients picked straight from my summer garden—sun-ripened tomatoes, tender eggplant, sweet peppers, and garlic. It reminded me so much of my mom’s garden growing up, where the late-summer harvest always turned into something cozy and delicious simmering on the stove.

But you don’t need a garden to enjoy this soup. Just grab the freshest produce you can find—whether it’s from the farmers’ market, your local grocery store, or a roadside stand. A simple roast in the oven brings out deep, rich flavor, and the result is a rustic bowl of comfort that tastes like it’s been passed down through generations.

Things to know about this Tuscan roasted tomato & eggplant soup

- **It’s naturally simple and wholesome.** Made with just fresh vegetables, broth, and olive oil, this soup is light, nourishing, and full of flavor—perfect for any season.
- **Roasting is the magic step.** Roasting the tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, and garlic concentrates their flavors and gives the soup a rich, slightly smoky depth that you just can’t get from boiling alone.
- **Customizable to your kitchen.** No eggplant? Add zucchini. Want it creamier? Blend in a spoonful of ricotta or coconut milk. Add white beans for protein, a handful of pasta to make it hearty, or a pinch of smoked paprika for extra warmth.
- **Use what’s in season.** Fresh summer tomatoes are ideal, but if it’s not tomato season, good-quality canned San Marzano tomatoes work too—just roast the other veggies and add the canned tomatoes in the blender stage.
- **It freezes beautifully.** Cool it completely before freezing in airtight containers or freezer bags. It’s perfect for those chilly nights when you need something cozy and homemade.
- **Craving more seasonal Italian comfort?**
  Here are a few more recipes straight from my kitchen to yours—fresh, simple, and full of flavor:
- Roasted Zucchini Panzanella Salad
  Amaretti-Stuffed Summer Peaches
  Italian Summer Street Corn

Tuscan roasted Tomato & Eggplant Soup



Tuscan roasted tomato and eggplant soup combines oven-roasted tomatoes, tender eggplant, garlic, and herbs into a rich and flavorful Italian soup. A rustic, comforting recipe that highlights simple Mediterranean ingredients

- 2 lbs. ripe tomatoes (Roma or heirloom, halved)
- 1 medium eggplant (cut into cubes)
- 2 bell peppers (red, yellow, or orange, seeded and chopped)
- 1 small yellow onion (quartered)
- 6 garlic cloves (peeled)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper (to taste)
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 3 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves
- Optional for serving: extra virgin olive oil (pesto sauce, ricotta, or crusty bread)

1. **Roast the vegetables:** Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). On a large baking sheet, toss tomatoes, eggplant, bell peppers, onion, and garlic with olive oil, salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes.Roast for 35–40 minutes, until vegetables are soft and caramelized.
2. **Blend:** Transfer roasted vegetables to a blender or use

an emersion blender with 1 cup of broth. Blend until smooth (or leave slightly chunky for a rustic texture).

3. **Simmer:** Pour into a pot, add the remaining 2 cups of broth, and bring to a simmer over medium heat for 10–15 minutes. Stir in fresh basil.
4. **Serve:** Ladle into bowls. Finish with a drizzle of olive oil, pesto sauce or a spoonful of ricotta. Serve with warm, crusty bread.

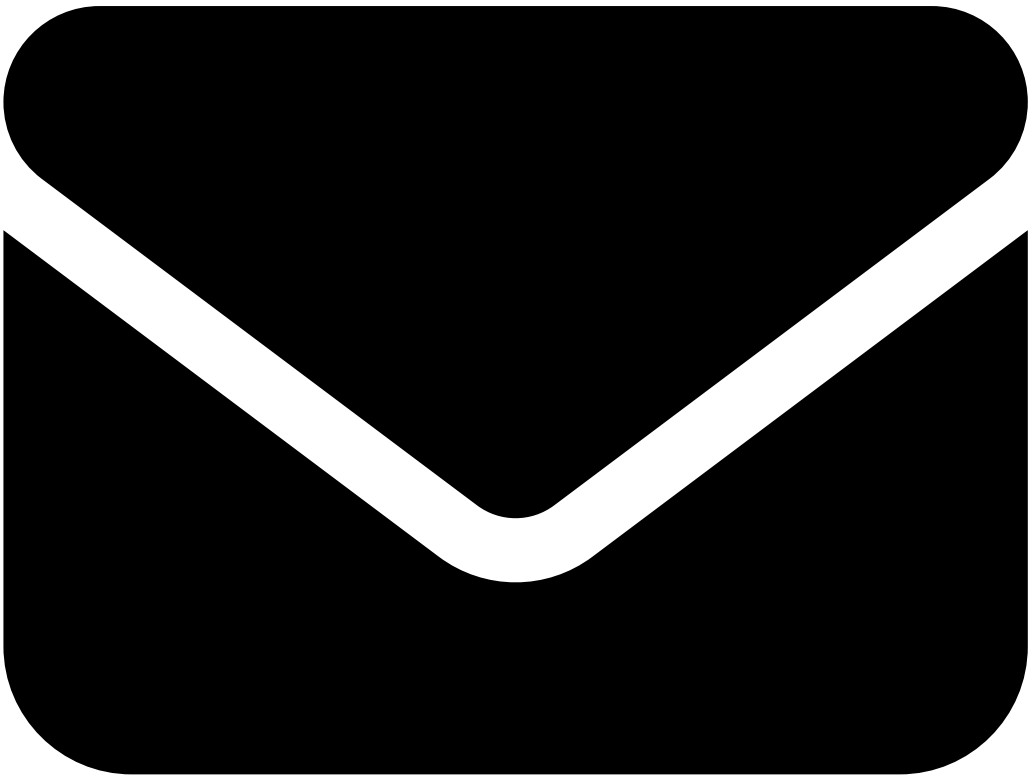
Soup
Italian

Roasted Zucchini Panzanella Salad recipe

Roasted Zucchini Panzanella Salad Recipe

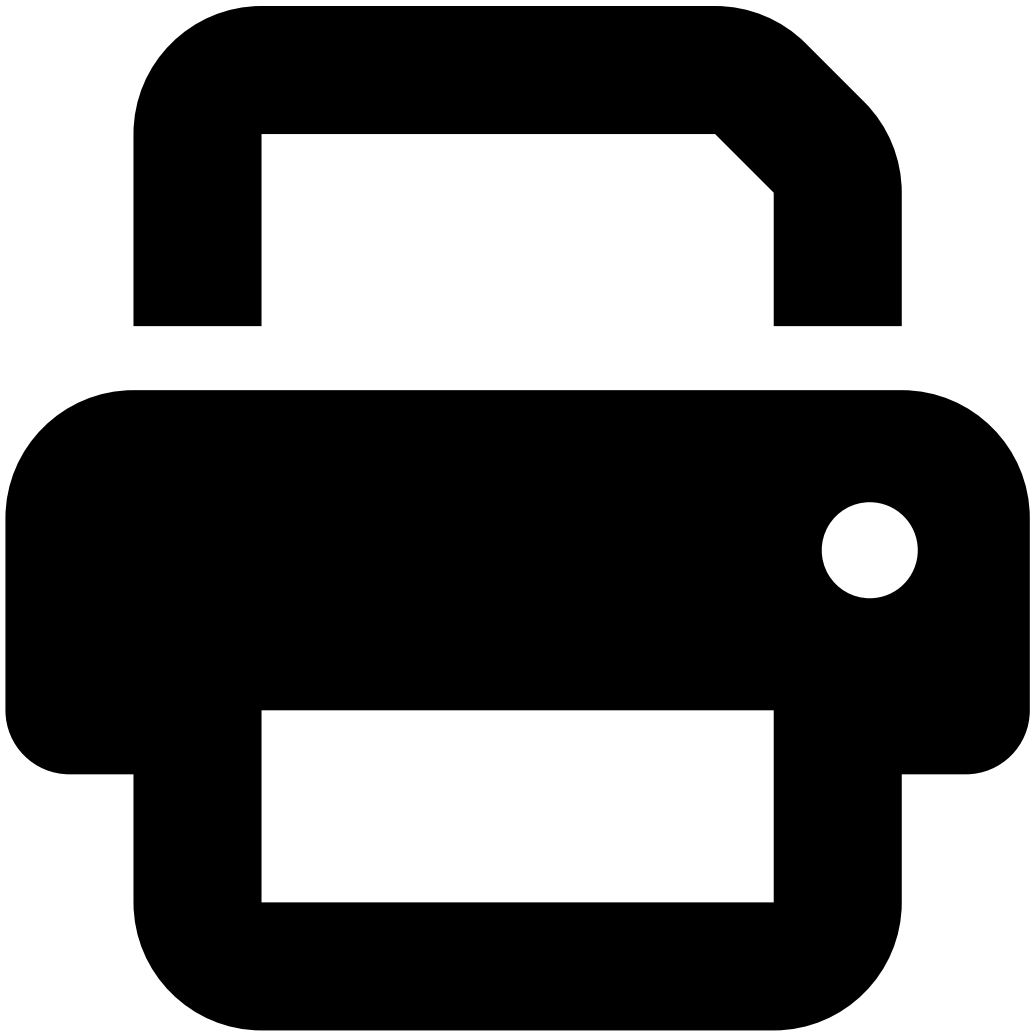
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SMS



If your garden is anything like mine right now, it’s bursting with zucchini—everywhere I turn, another one is ready to be picked. I swear they multiply overnight! This time of year, I’m always looking for new ways to use them up, and this **Roasted Zucchini Panzanella Salad** is one of my favorite solutions. It’s rustic, simple, and the perfect way to let those garden veggies shine. With toasted bread, juicy tomatoes, and a punchy vinaigrette, it’s everything I love about summer on a plate.

It’s also one of those no-fuss dishes that gets better as it sits. The roasted zucchini brings a tender sweetness, the bread soaks up all the flavor, and the tomatoes and basil keep it light and bright. Whether you serve it as a main dish or a side for grilling season, this is one zucchini recipe you’ll come back to again and again.

Things to know about this Roasted Zucchini Panzanella Salad recipe

- **Perfect for peak zucchini season:** This is a great way to use up an abundance of garden zucchini while keeping things light and flavorful.
- **Best with day-old bread:** Slightly stale or toasted bread holds up best in the vinaigrette and gives that classic panzanella texture.
- **Customize it your way:** Add crumbled feta, white beans, grilled corn, or olives for extra protein or punch.
- **Let it sit before serving:** Giving the salad 10–15 minutes to rest allows the bread to soak up the vinaigrette and all the flavors to meld beautifully.
- **Tastes even better the next day:** Store leftovers in the fridge for up to 2 days—it makes a fantastic next-day lunch.
- **Make it a meal:** Serve it alongside grilled chicken, fish, or even a simple fried egg on top for a satisfying summer dinner.
- **Craving more fresh summer flavors?**
  Check out a few more of my garden-inspired favorites:
    - Italian Amaretti stuffed summer peaches– sweet, savory, and summery
    - Italian Summer Street Corn – with parmesan and herbs
    - How to make Italian Pickled Eggplant – (melanzane sotto aceto) a pantry staple from my childhood

Roasted Zucchini Panzanella Salad Recipe



Roasted zucchini panzanella salad combines caramelized zucchini, toasted bread, fresh herbs, and seasonal vegetables in a classic Tuscan-style bread salad. A rustic Italian recipe that is perfect for summer gatherings or a light meal.

- 2 medium zucchini (sliced into cubed)
- 2 cups crusty bread (cubed (day-old or toasted))
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes (halved)
- 1/2 red onion (thinly sliced)
- 1/2 cup fresh basil leaves (torn)
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil (divided)
- 2 teaspoon each garlic powder and paprika
- Salt and freshly cracked black pepper (to taste)
- 1 garlic clove (minced (for vinaigrette))
- Optional: shaved Parmigiano or crumbled feta for serving

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Season the zucchini: Toss sliced zucchini with 2 tablespoons olive oil, garlic powder, paprika, salt, and black pepper. Spread on a parchment-lined baking sheet in a single layer.

3. Roast for 20–25 minutes, flipping once, until golden and slightly crisp around the edges. Let cool slightly.
4. Toast the bread: While the zucchini roasts, toss cubed bread with a drizzle of olive oil and toast in the oven for 10–15 minutes, until golden and crunchy.
5. Make the vinaigrette: In a small bowl, whisk together red wine vinegar, 2 tablespoons olive oil, minced garlic (if using), a pinch of salt, and pepper.
6. Assemble the salad: In a large bowl, combine roasted zucchini, toasted bread, halved cherry tomatoes, red onion, and basil. Drizzle with vinaigrette and toss gently.
7. Let it sit for 10–15 minutes so the flavors meld and the bread absorbs some dressing.
8. Serve at room temperature, optionally topped with shaved Parmigiano or crumbled feta.

Salad, Side Dish
Italian
zucchini panzanella salad, Italian bread salad,