Italian Sweet Potato Gratin with Fontina & Parmesan

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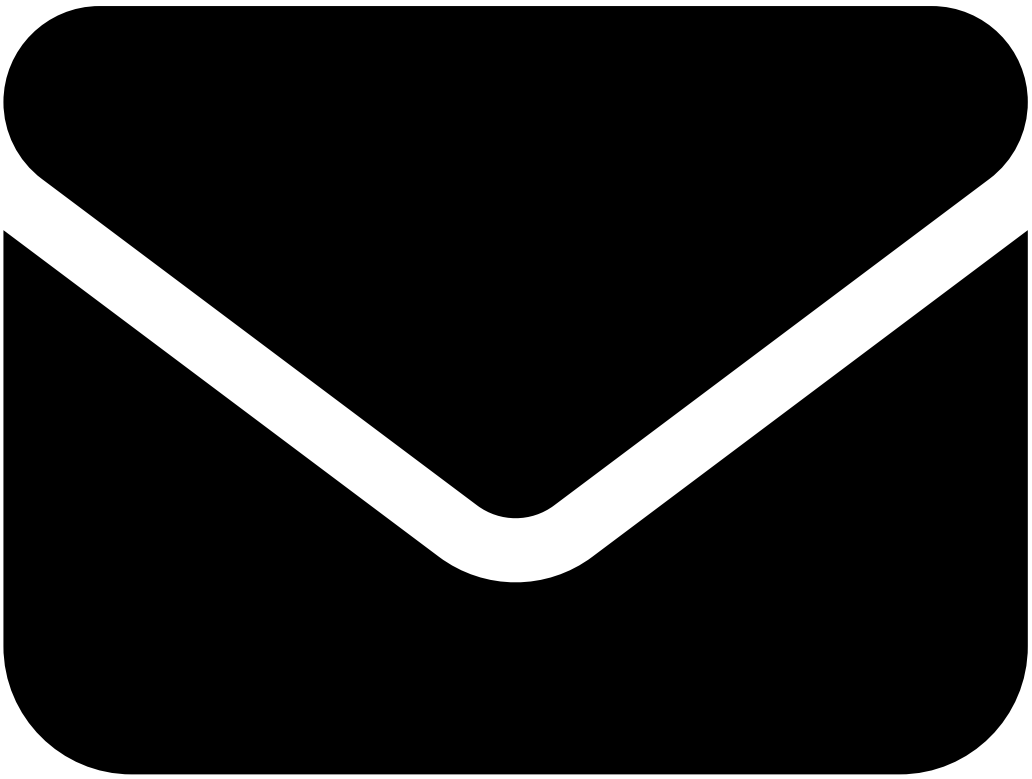




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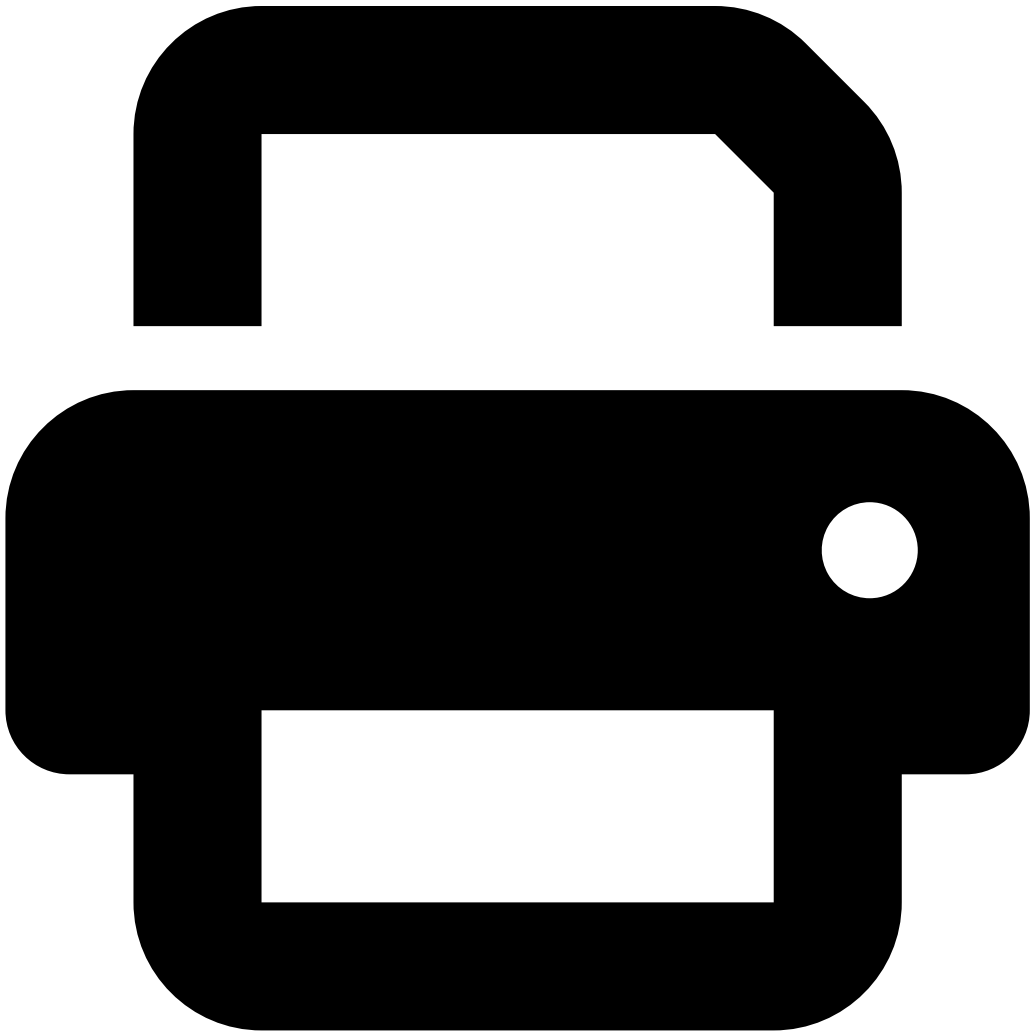

After spending so many years in the kitchen, I’ve always loved taking a simple ingredient and turning it into something special. This Italian Sweet Potato Gratin with Fontina and Parmesan is my take on a classic comfort-food side dish, with a little Italian inspiration.

Growing up in Italy, sweet potatoes weren’t something I remember having on our family table. We cooked with what we had, and seasonal vegetables were always a big part of our meals. But I love taking an ingredient and giving it an Italian twist.

Thinly sliced sweet potatoes are layered with a creamy garlic and herb mixture, then baked with buttery Fontina and freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano until tender, golden, and beautifully bubbly. The natural sweetness of the potatoes balances the savory richness of the cheeses.

Whether you’re serving this for Thanksgiving, a holiday gathering, or Sunday dinner, this gratin is a delicious change from traditional sweet potato casseroles. And best of all, it brings a little Italian comfort to the table.

Good to Know: Italian Sweet Potato Gratin with Fontina & Parmesan

Can I make sweet potato gratin ahead of time?

Yes! You can assemble the gratin a day ahead. Prepare the layers, add the cream mixture, cover tightly, and refrigerate. When ready to bake, let it sit at room temperature for about 20–30 minutes before placing it in the oven. Add a little extra baking time if needed.

How do I store leftover sweet potato gratin?

Allow the gratin to cool completely, then transfer leftovers to an airtight container or cover the baking dish tightly. Refrigerate for up to 3–4 days.

Can I freeze sweet potato gratin?

You can, although cream-based gratins may change texture slightly after freezing. For best results, freeze after baking and cooling completely. Wrap well and freeze for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before reheating.

How do I reheat sweet potato gratin?

Cover with foil and reheat in a 350°F oven until warmed through, approximately 20–25 minutes depending on the portion.

Remove the foil during the last few minutes to refresh the golden cheese topping.

What cheese can I substitute for Fontina?

Fontina is wonderful because it melts smoothly and has a buttery flavor. Gruyère is a good substitute, as is mild provolone. I recommend keeping the Parmesan because it adds that distinctive Italian flavor.

Can I use a different type of potato?

Absolutely! Yukon Gold potatoes work beautifully in this recipe. You can also combine sweet potatoes and regular potatoes for a delicious layered gratin.

A Few More Recipes You Might Enjoy

If you love comforting Italian-inspired side dishes, here are a few more recipes to explore:

- Italian honey Roasted holiday Vegetables
- Roasted balsamic glazed Brussel sprouts
- Italian Parmesan Roasted Potatoes
- Baked three Cheese appetizer

Kitchen Tools I Recommend

Ceramic Baking Dish

Perfect for baking and serving your sweet potato gratin right at the table.

Mandoline Slicer

Makes slicing sweet potatoes evenly and consistently much easier. Always use the hand guard.

Box Cheese Grater

Freshly grated Fontina and Parmesan melt beautifully in this gratin.

Glass Food Storage Containers

Great for storing leftover gratin and other holiday side dishes.

Let’s Keep in Touch!

If you make this Italian Sweet Potato Gratin with Fontina and Parmesan, I’d love to hear what you think! Leave a comment and a rating below. Your feedback helps other home cooks discover and enjoy my recipes, too.

And don’t forget to follow along for more Italian-inspired recipes from my kitchen to yours!

Italian Sweet Potato Gratin with Fontina & Parmesan

Thinly sliced sweet potatoes layered with a creamy garlic and herb sauce, Fontina, and freshly grated Parmesan. Baked until tender, golden, and bubbly, this Italian-inspired gratin makes a delicious holiday side dish.

- 3 large sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced into thin rounds
- 1 cup heavy cream

- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 1/2 cups shredded Italian Fontina cheese
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp. butter, for greasing
- 2 tsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped
- Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
- salt and pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Butter a 9-by-9-inch baking dish.
2. Peel the sweet potatoes and slice them approximately ⅛-inch thick using a mandolin or sharp knife.
3. In a saucepan, combine heavy cream, milk, garlic, thyme, rosemary, nutmeg, salt, and pepper. Warm gently over medium-low heat. Do not boil.
4. Arrange half the sweet potato slices in overlapping layers in the prepared baking dish.
5. Sprinkle with half the Fontina and a little Parmesan.
6. Add the remaining sweet potatoes and pour the warm cream mixture evenly over the top.
7. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes.
8. Remove the foil, sprinkle with the remaining Fontina and Parmesan, and bake uncovered for another 10–15 minutes, until the potatoes are tender and the top is golden and bubbling.
9. Allow to rest for 10–15 minutes before serving.

Use Italian Fontina Val d’Aosta if available. It melts beautifully and has a wonderful buttery flavor. Slice the sweet potatoes evenly so they cook at the same rate.

Appetizer, Side Dish
Italian
Sweet Potato Gratin

The Ultimate Thanksgiving Dinner Guide: Recipes & Tips

The Ultimate Thanksgiving Dinner Guide: Recipes & tips

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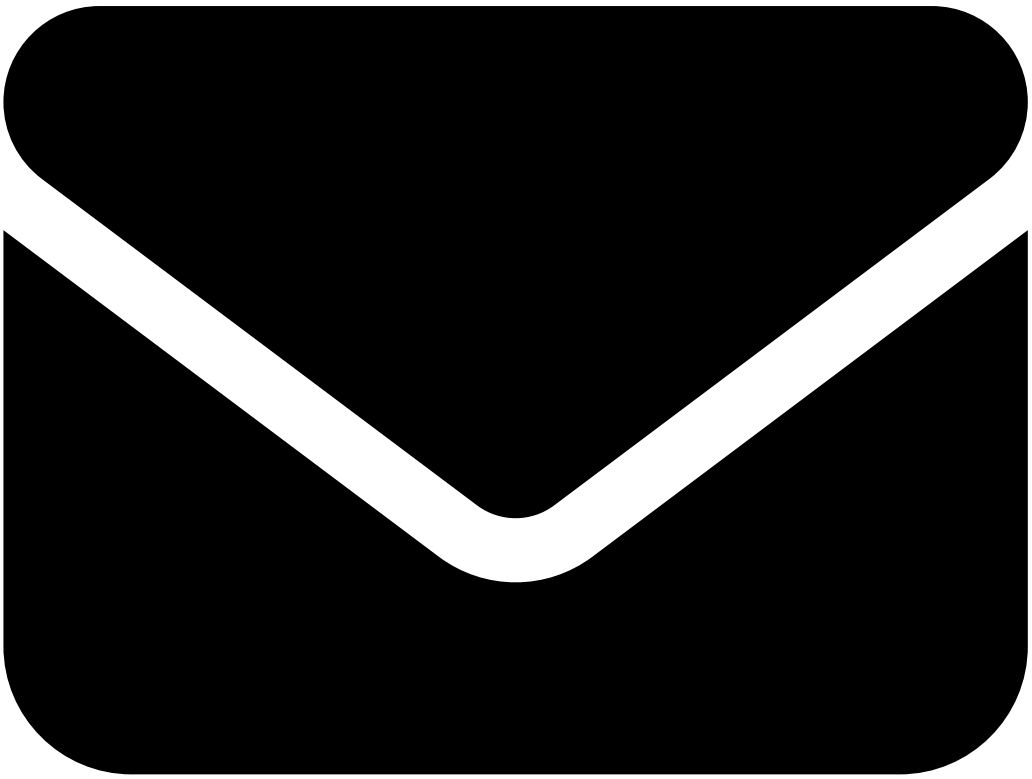




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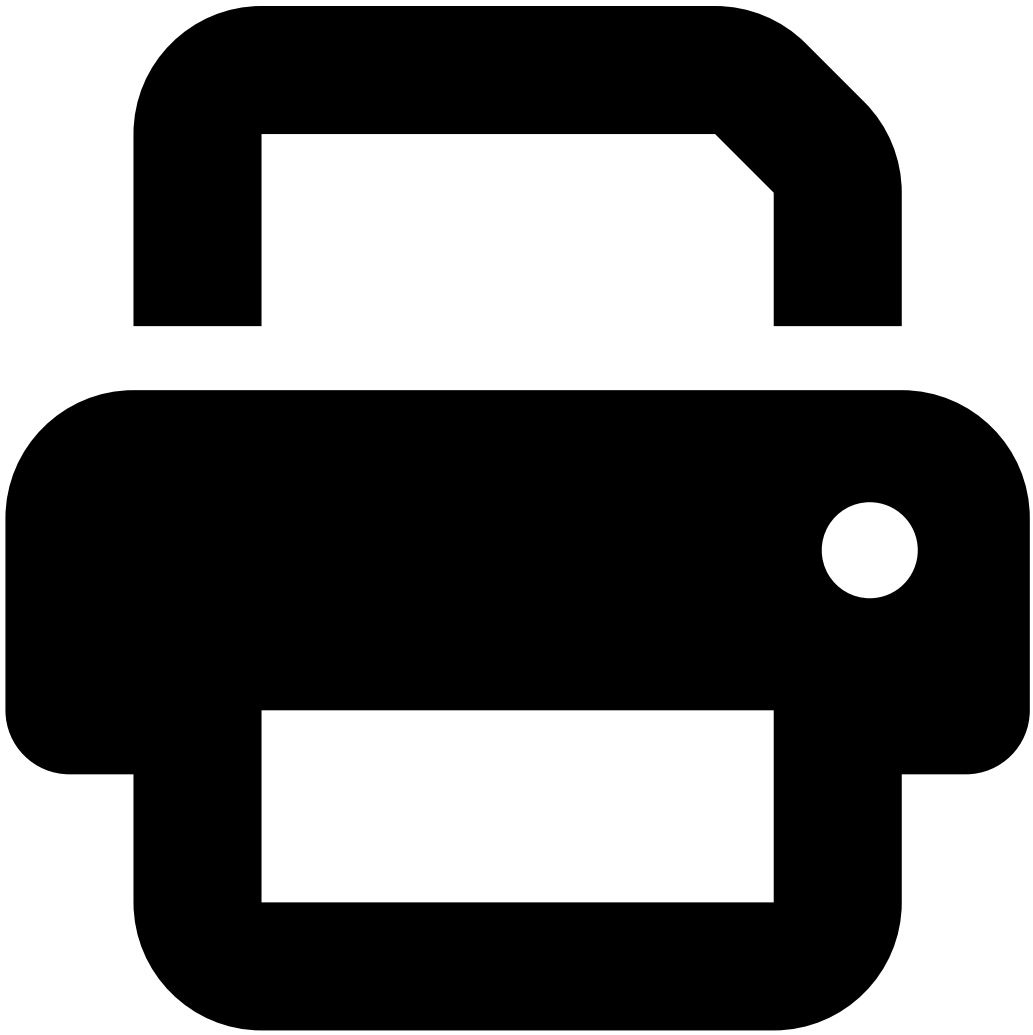

Thanksgiving is all about gathering around the table, sharing delicious food, and making memories with the people you love. And if there is one thing I have learned over the years, it is that the best holiday meals are the ones made with love, a little planning, and recipes everyone looks forward to eating.

We don’t celebrate Thanksgiving in Italy in the traditional American way, but the spirit of the holiday feels very familiar to me. Growing up with Italian food, I learned early on that food brings people together. Sunday dinners and holiday feasts meant a table full of homemade dishes, plenty of conversation, and always enough food for one more person.

When I moved to America, I fell in love with Thanksgiving for that very reason. It reminded me of the family gatherings I grew up with in Italy. Over the years, I have brought a little of my Italian cooking into the holiday, combining classic Thanksgiving favorites with comforting recipes inspired by my

Italian roots.

Whether you are hosting your first Thanksgiving dinner or have been preparing the holiday meal for years, this ultimate Thanksgiving dinner guide will help you plan a delicious menu from start to finish. I am sharing my favorite turkey recipe, savory stuffing, flavorful side dishes, homemade gravy, cranberry sauce, desserts, make-ahead tips, and creative ideas for Thanksgiving leftovers.

My goal is to help you spend less time worrying about the kitchen and more time enjoying the people gathered around your table.

What's on the Ultimate Thanksgiving Dinner Menu?

A memorable Thanksgiving dinner doesn't have to be complicated. Start with a beautiful roasted turkey, add a few favorite side dishes, finish with something sweet, and you have a meal everyone can enjoy.

Here is the Thanksgiving menu I recommend, with a few Italian-inspired touches along the way.

- **Main dish:** Garlic and herb roasted holiday turkey.
- **Soup course:** Italian Holiday Chicken Soup.
- **Stuffing:** Savory Sausage and Mushroom Stuffing or Chicken Apple Stuffing.
- **Potatoes:** Italian crispy roasted potatoes
- **Vegetables:** Balsamic Glazed Brussels Sprouts.
- **Gravy:** Easy Savory Mushroom Gravy.
- **Cranberry sauce:** Easy Homemade Cranberry
- **Dessert:** Italian Jam Crostata, Italian Amaretti Cookies, or Chocolate Caffe Affogato.

You don't need to make everything on this list. Choose the dishes your family loves most, add one or two new recipes, and

make the menu your own.

The Star of Thanksgiving Dinner: Roast Turkey

For me, the turkey is the centerpiece of the Thanksgiving table. A beautifully roasted turkey with golden skin, tender meat, and plenty of flavor makes the whole house smell wonderful.

My Best Holiday Turkey is roasted with garlic, herbs, and butter for a flavorful main dish that deserves its place at the center of your holiday meal.

Although turkey wasn’t something we traditionally prepared for holidays in Italy, I have come to appreciate how a roast bird brings everyone together in much the same way as a beautiful Italian Sunday roast.

Tips for a Juicy, Flavorful Turkey

- **Plan your thawing time.** A frozen turkey needs approximately 24 hours in the refrigerator for every 4 to 5 pounds. Place it in a container to catch any drips.
- **Season ahead.** Prepare your turkey the day before if your recipe allows, giving the seasoning time to work.
- **Use a roasting thermometer.** Cooking time varies with the size of the bird, your oven, and whether the turkey is stuffed. Check the internal temperature rather than relying on time alone.
- **Let it rest.** Allow the turkey to rest before carving so you can serve it more easily.
- **Save the carcass.** The bones make a wonderful base for homemade turkey broth and soup.

For food safety, cook the turkey to 165°F in the thickest part

of the breast and the innermost thigh and wing areas, avoiding the bone. If you prepare stuffing inside the bird, the center of the stuffing must also reach 165°F. I recommend baking stuffing separately for easier timing and temperature control.

Start the Meal with Italian Holiday Chicken Soup

In my Italian kitchen, soup is a comforting way to begin a special meal. It brings warmth to the table and reminds me of the simple dishes my mother made for family gatherings.

My Italian Holiday Chicken Soup is a lovely option if you want to add an Italian touch to your Thanksgiving menu. It is flavorful without being overly heavy, and you can prepare it ahead of time and reheat it when you are ready to serve.

If you are serving a large Thanksgiving dinner, offer small portions so everyone still has room for the main course and all those wonderful sides.

My hosting tip: Make the soup the day before Thanksgiving. One less dish to prepare on the big day means more time to enjoy your guests.

Thanksgiving Stuffing Recipes

For many families, stuffing is just as important as the turkey. I love a stuffing with plenty of flavor, a tender center, and a deliciously browned top.

I like having more than one option because Thanksgiving traditions vary from family to family. These two recipes bring different flavors to the table.

Savory Sausage and Mushroom Stuffing

My Savory Sausage and Mushroom Stuffing is a hearty choice for anyone who loves a rich, savory side dish. The sausage and mushrooms bring plenty of flavor, making it a natural companion to roasted turkey and homemade gravy.

Chicken Apple Stuffing

For a sweet-and-savory combination, try my Chicken Apple Stuffing. The apples add a touch of sweetness that works beautifully with the savory ingredients and autumn flavors.

Planning tip: Choose one stuffing recipe for a smaller gathering or make both if you are hosting a crowd. Assemble your stuffing ahead when

the recipe permits, refrigerate it safely, and bake it according to the recipe instructions.

The Best Thanksgiving Side Dishes

If you ask me, the side dishes are where Thanksgiving dinner really comes together. You have the turkey, of course, but it is the combination of potatoes, vegetables, stuffing, gravy, and cranberry sauce that makes every plate special.

Here are my favorite Thanksgiving side dishes to consider for your holiday menu.

Crispy Roasted herb Potatoes

You cannot go wrong with potatoes at Thanksgiving. My crispy Italian roasted potatoes bring a delicious Italian-inspired touch to a familiar holiday favorite.

Parmesan adds savory flavor and gives this side dish a little something extra. Serve it alongside the turkey and spoon over plenty of gravy.

Balsamic Glazed Brussels Sprouts

Looking for a vegetable side that balances the richness of the meal? My Balsamic Glazed Brussels Sprouts are a quick stovetop option with a flavorful balsamic finish.

They add color to the Thanksgiving table and are a nice alternative to another casserole or oven-baked dish.

Homemade Cranberry Sauce

For me, cranberry sauce belongs on the Thanksgiving table. Its bright, tart flavor balances the richness of turkey, potatoes, and stuffing.

My Easy Homemade Cranberry Sauce comes together quickly and is a wonderful alternative to store-bought sauce. Make it ahead and refrigerate it until serving time.

Easy Savory Mushroom Gravy

A good gravy brings the entire plate together. My Easy Savory Mushroom Gravy is a flavorful option to serve with turkey, mashed potatoes, and stuffing.

Prepare it ahead if your recipe allows, then reheat gently before dinner. If it becomes too thick, whisk in a little warm stock until you reach the consistency you like.

How Many Side Dishes Should You Make?

You don’t need a dozen sides to make a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner. For a manageable menu, I recommend choosing three to five side dishes, depending on your guest count and family traditions.

A balanced menu might include:

- One potato dish.

- One stuffing.
- One or two vegetables.
- Cranberry sauce.
- Gravy.

If your family has a must-have holiday dish, make room for it. Thanksgiving is about tradition as much as it is about trying something new.

Thanksgiving Desserts: Sweet Endings to the Feast

After a table full of savory dishes, there is always room for something sweet. I love desserts that bring a little Italian tradition to the holiday, especially those meant to be shared with family over coffee.

Here are three favorites to consider.

Italian Jam Crostata

My Italian Jam Crostata is a lovely alternative to the usual Thanksgiving pie.

This traditional Italian-style tart has a tender pastry crust and a sweet jam filling.It looks beautiful on a dessert table and can be prepared

ahead.

Italian Crescent Amaretti Cookies

These Italian Amaretti Cookies are perfect for a holiday cookie platter. Serve them after dinner with coffee or package a few for guests to take home.

Chocolate Caffe Affogato

For something simple but special, try my Chocolate Caffe Affogato. It brings together coffee and chocolate for an easy dessert with an Italian feel.

My dessert tip: Make your desserts the day before whenever possible. Once dinner is over, you can serve them without having to return to the kitchen to bake.

How to Plan Thanksgiving Dinner Without the Stress

The secret to a relaxed Thanksgiving is doing as much as you can ahead of time. You do not want to spend the entire holiday rushing between the oven, stovetop, and refrigerator.

I like to begin with the menu, make a grocery list, and work backward from the time I want dinner on the table.

One Week Before Thanksgiving

- Finalize your menu and guest count.
- Write your grocery list and shop for pantry staples.
- Check that you have enough roasting pans, baking dishes, serving bowls, and utensils.
- Make room in the refrigerator and freezer.
- Check the size of your turkey and begin planning its thawing schedule.

Three to Four Days Before Thanksgiving

- If you are using a frozen turkey, make sure it is thawing safely in the refrigerator according to its weight.
- Shop for fresh produce and remaining ingredients.
- Prepare cranberry sauce if your recipe allows.

- Make pie dough or other dessert components that can be prepared ahead.
- Wash and organize vegetables.

The Day Before Thanksgiving

- Season or brine the turkey according to your recipe.
- Prepare the soup.
- Assemble stuffing and casseroles that can be refrigerated before baking.
- Make desserts and store them properly.
- Prepare ingredients for vegetables and other side dishes.
- Set the table and organize serving dishes.

Thanksgiving Morning

- Start roasting the turkey early enough to allow for cooking and resting.
- Prepare any dishes that need to be baked fresh.
- Reheat the soup and make sure your gravy is ready.
- Finish the vegetables and potatoes.
- Set out appetizers so guests have something to enjoy while you finish cooking.

Before Dinner

- Let the turkey rest before carving.
- Finish reheating prepared sides.
- Transfer everything into serving dishes.
- Bring the cranberry sauce and other chilled items to the table when appropriate.
- Take a breath, sit down, and enjoy the meal you worked so hard to prepare.

Thanksgiving Hosting Tips That Make a Difference

You don’t need a professionally styled table or a kitchen full of expensive equipment to host a wonderful holiday. A few practical details can make the day much easier.

Set the table the night before. Arrange plates, glasses, flatware, napkins, and serving pieces so you don’t have to think about them on Thanksgiving Day.

Plan your oven space. The turkey takes priority, so decide in advance which side dishes need oven time and which can be prepared on the stovetop.

Use serving dishes strategically. Match each dish with its serving bowl or platter before the holiday. Labeling them with sticky notes can save you from searching through cabinets at the last minute.

Keep appetizers simple. A few easy bites are enough while guests mingle. You don’t want appetizers to become another full meal that takes up valuable cooking time.

Ask for help. Let someone pour drinks, set out bread, or help clear the table. You do not have to do everything yourself.

Keep the menu realistic. A smaller selection of well-prepared dishes is better than an exhausting menu that keeps you away from your guests.

What to Do with Thanksgiving Leftovers

One of my favorite things about Thanksgiving is opening the refrigerator the next day and finding ingredients for another

comforting meal. With a little creativity, leftover turkey, potatoes, stuffing, and cranberry sauce can become something entirely new.

Here are a few ideas from my kitchen.

Leftover Turkey Soup

Don’t toss that turkey carcass! Use it to make a rich, flavorful homemade broth, then turn your leftover turkey into a comforting soup. It’s an easy, delicious way to make the most of your Thanksgiving meal and enjoy a little holiday comfort all weekend long.

Turkey Croquettes or Patties

If you have leftover mashed potatoes and turkey, try my Turkey Croquettes or Patties. The linked recipe uses chicken, but you can adapt it with chopped leftover turkey and mashed potatoes, adjusting the mixture as needed.

Turkey, Cranberry, and Brie Panini

My Leftover Turkey, Cranberry, and Brie Panini is an easy way to turn Thanksgiving leftovers into a delicious lunch. Layer turkey, cranberry sauce, and Brie on your favorite artisan bread, then grill until the bread is golden and the cheese is melted.

Leftover safety tip: Refrigerate perishable Thanksgiving foods within two hours. Store leftovers in shallow containers so they cool quickly, and use refrigerated turkey and other cooked leftovers within three to four days. Reheat leftovers to 165°F. Freeze what you will not use in time.

Frequently Asked Questions About

Thanksgiving Dinner

What should I serve for a traditional Thanksgiving dinner?

A traditional Thanksgiving menu usually includes roasted turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, vegetables, and dessert. You can add family favorites or Italian-inspired dishes to make the meal your own.

How far ahead can I prepare Thanksgiving dinner?

Many components can be prepared one to three days ahead, depending on the recipe. Cranberry sauce, soups, some desserts, and certain casseroles are excellent make-ahead options. Follow each recipe’s storage instructions, and keep perishable foods refrigerated.

How much turkey should I plan per person?

A common starting point is about one pound of whole turkey per person, with more if you want generous leftovers. Adjust for the size of your gathering, the number of side dishes, and whether you are serving a whole turkey or turkey portions.

What can I make the day before Thanksgiving?

You can often prepare cranberry sauce, soup, desserts, stuffing components, and some casseroles the day before. You can also chop vegetables, organize ingredients, and set the table. Check the individual recipe instructions to see what can be assembled or cooked ahead.

How do I keep Thanksgiving dinner from becoming overwhelming?

Choose a manageable menu, make a shopping list, prepare dishes ahead, and plan your oven schedule. You can also ask guests to bring a dish or help with serving. Remember, the goal is to enjoy the holiday, not to make every dish from scratch at the last minute.

Can I make an Italian-inspired Thanksgiving dinner?

Absolutely! Keep the turkey and traditional favorites your family loves, then add Italian touches such as Parmesan potatoes, homemade soup, an Italian crostata, or amaretti cookies. A combination of familiar holiday dishes and recipes inspired by your own traditions makes the meal personal.

Bringing It All Together

Thanksgiving has become one of my favorite celebrations because it reminds me of what I have always loved about Italian cooking: bringing people together around a table filled with homemade food.

You do not need to prepare every recipe in this guide to create a beautiful holiday meal. Choose the dishes that matter most to your family, plan ahead, and leave yourself enough time to enjoy the day.

Whether you are serving a classic turkey dinner, adding a few Italian-inspired dishes, or starting new family traditions, I hope these Thanksgiving recipes and planning tips help make your holiday delicious, relaxed, and full of wonderful memories.

If you try any of these recipes, I would love to hear what you served. Leave me a comment below and let me know which dishes are must-haves at your Thanksgiving table. And if you share your holiday cooking on Instagram, tag me so I can see what you made!

Happy Thanksgiving from my kitchen to yours!

Italian Bread Meatballs (Polpette di Pane

Italian Bread Meatballs (Polpette di Pane)

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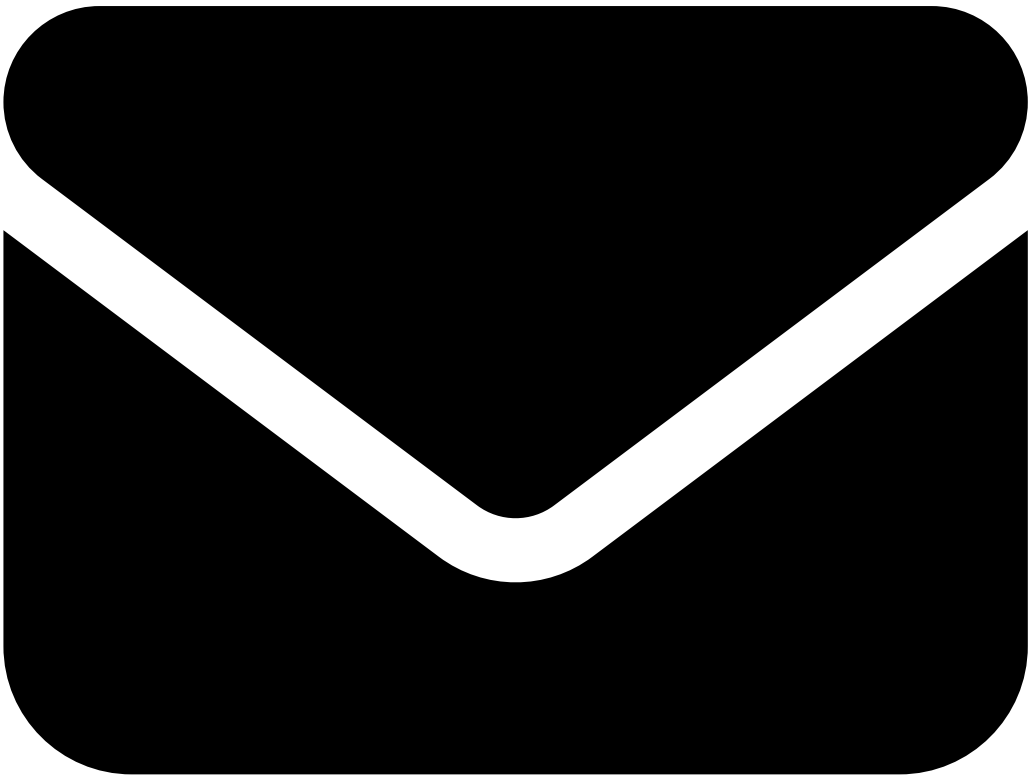




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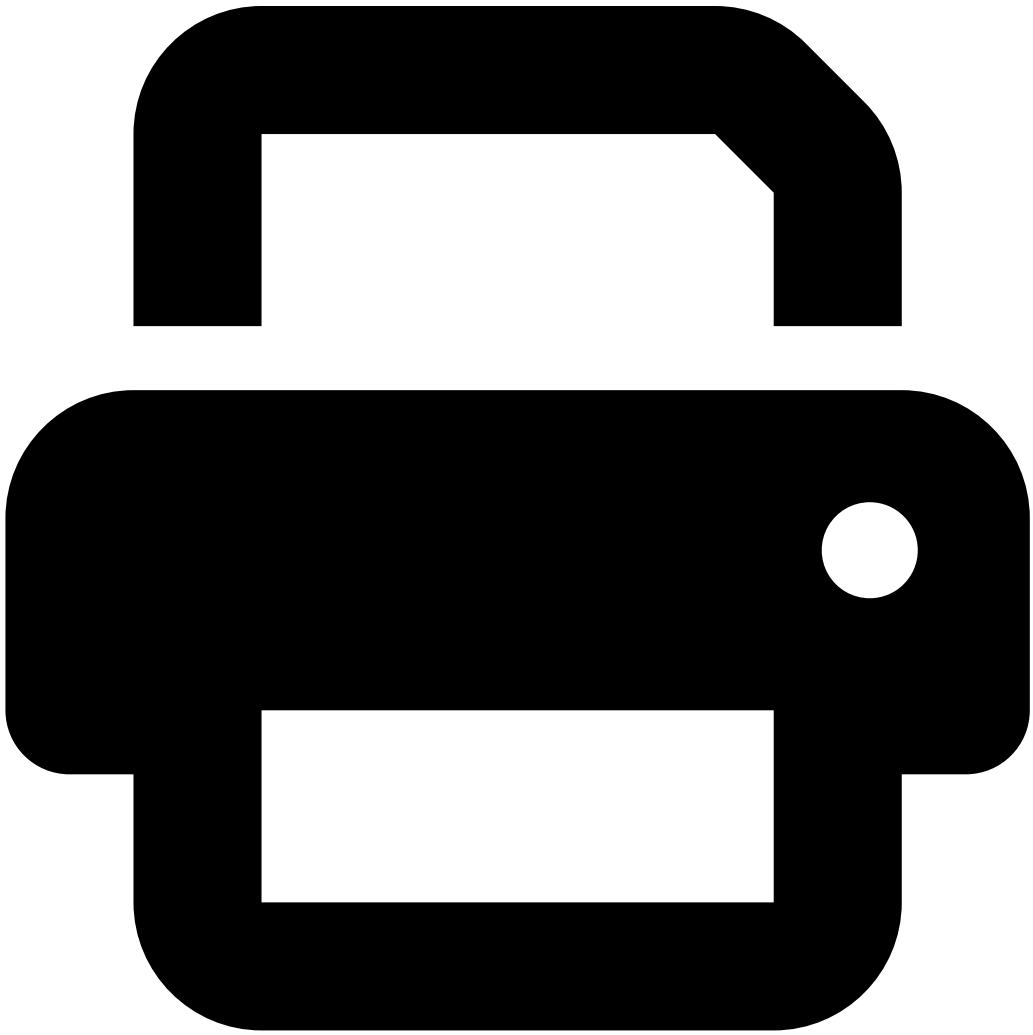

These Italian bread meatballs, also known as *polpette di pane*, are a delicious way to turn stale bread into something special. Made with simple ingredients like Italian bread, eggs, Parmesan cheese, garlic, and fresh parsley, these meatless meatballs are crispy on the outside and soft on the inside.

Growing up with Italian cooking, you learn pretty quickly that good bread never needs to go to waste. Recipes like these are a perfect example of *cucina povera*, the traditional Italian way of making delicious meals from simple, affordable ingredients you already have in your kitchen.

I love serving these bread meatballs as an appetizer, a side dish, or gently simmered in homemade tomato sauce. They’re simple, comforting, and full of old-fashioned Italian flavor. If you’ve never tried meatballs without meat, this is a recipe you need to make!

Why You'll Love These Italian Bread Meatballs

- **A great way to use stale bread:** Give leftover Italian bread a delicious second life.
- **Simple ingredients:** You probably have most of what you need already.
- **Meatless and satisfying:** Parmesan, garlic, and parsley add plenty of flavor.
- **Versatile:** Serve them as an appetizer, side dish, or with your favorite Italian tomato sauce.

Tips for Making the Best Bread Meatballs

- **Remove excess milk.** Too much moisture can make the mixture difficult to shape.
- **Use your hands to mix.** This makes it easier to feel whether the mixture is holding together properly.
- **Adjust the consistency.** If the mixture is too wet, add a little more Parmesan or breadcrumbs. If it's too dry, add a small amount of milk.
- **Fry a test piece.** Cook a small portion first to check the seasoning and make sure the mixture holds together before frying the entire batch.

What to Serve with Italian Bread Meatballs

These traditional Italian bread meatballs are delicious served straight from the skillet while they're still warm and crispy.

You can serve them as an appetizer with marinara sauce for

dipping, alongside roasted vegetables, or as a side dish with your favorite Italian meal.

For a softer, saucier version, add the fried bread meatballs to a pot of homemade tomato sauce and simmer gently for a few minutes. Handle them carefully because bread meatballs are more delicate than meat-based meatballs.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are Italian bread meatballs made without meat?

Yes! Traditional polpette di pane are meatless bread-based meatballs made with ingredients such as stale bread, eggs, cheese, and herbs. Recipes vary by region and family.

Why are my bread meatballs falling apart?

The mixture may be too wet or may not have enough binding ingredients. Squeeze excess milk from the bread and make sure the eggs and cheese are thoroughly mixed in. If necessary, add a little more Parmesan or breadcrumbs.

Can I make bread meatballs ahead of time?

You can prepare the mixture ahead of time and refrigerate it in a covered container until you’re ready to shape and fry the meatballs. Keep it refrigerated and cook within a day for the best quality.

Can I cook bread meatballs in tomato sauce?

Yes, but frying them first helps them develop a golden crust and hold their shape. Add them to gently simmering sauce near the end and avoid vigorous stirring.

How to Store and Reheat

Refrigerator: Store leftover cooked bread meatballs in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Reheating: Reheat in a skillet over medium-low heat until warmed through. If they're in tomato sauce, warm them gently in the sauce. An oven or air fryer can help bring back some of their crispness when reheating them without sauce.

Freezing: Bread meatballs are best enjoyed fresh. If freezing, cool them completely and freeze in a single layer before transferring to a freezer-safe container. Their texture may soften after thawing.

A Little Taste of Traditional Italian Cooking

Italian bread meatballs remind me that some of the best recipes come from making the most of what you have. With a few everyday ingredients, you can turn leftover bread into something the whole family will enjoy.

If you make these *polpette di pane*, leave me a comment and let me know how you served them. I love hearing how these traditional Italian dishes find their way into your kitchen!

More Italian Recipes You'll Love

If you love these traditional Italian bread meatballs, here are a few more recipes from my kitchen you might enjoy! From homemade tomato sauce to comforting pasta dishes, these are the kinds of recipes I love sharing with my family.

- **Homemade Italian tomato Sauce** – Perfect for serving with

these bread meatballs.

- **Italian Meatballs** – A classic Italian favorite for Sunday dinner.
- **Homemade Italian Breadcrumbs** – Another great way to use leftover bread.
- **Homemade Italian Focaccia** – Soft, flavorful bread to serve alongside your favorite Italian meal.
- **Easy Italian Pasta Recipes** – Find more comforting pasta dishes for your next family dinner.

My Favorite Kitchen Tools

You don’t need fancy equipment to make these Italian bread meatballs, but a few kitchen essentials make preparing them easier. Here are some helpful tools you can find on Amazon.

- **Large Mixing Bowl** – Plenty of room to mix the soaked bread, eggs, cheese, and seasonings.
- **Stainless Steel Skillet** – Ideal for frying the bread meatballs until golden brown.
- **Stainless Steel Tongs** – Helpful for gently turning the meatballs as they fry.
- **Box Grater** – Perfect for freshly grating Parmesan cheese.
- **Spider Strainer** – Makes it easy to lift the fried bread meatballs from the hot oil.

Italian Bread Meatballs (Polpette di Pane)



These traditional Italian bread meatballs are made with stale Italian bread, eggs, Parmesan cheese, garlic, and parsley. Fried until golden brown, they're crispy on the outside, soft inside, and a delicious way to use leftover bread.

- 6 cups stale Italian bread, torn into small pieces
- 1-11/2 cups milk, as needed
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- salt and pepper to taste
- olive oil for frying

1. **Soften the bread.** Place the torn stale bread in a large bowl. Pour the milk over the bread a little at a time, allowing it to soften. You want the bread moist but not soaking wet. Squeeze out any excess milk with your hands.

2. **Prepare the mixture.** Add the eggs, grated Parmesan cheese, minced garlic, chopped parsley, salt, and black pepper to the softened bread. Mix thoroughly with your hands until everything is well combined. The mixture should hold together when pressed. If it feels too wet, add a little more Parmesan cheese or breadcrumbs.

3. **Shape the bread meatballs.** Scoop up portions of the mixture and roll them into small balls, or gently flatten them into patties. Press them firmly enough to hold their shape without compacting them too much.

4. **Heat the oil.** Pour enough olive oil into a large skillet to cover the bottom generously. Heat over medium heat until the oil is hot but not smoking.

5. **Fry the bread meatballs.** Carefully place the meatballs in the skillet in batches, leaving space between them. Fry for approximately 3–4 minutes per side, turning gently, until golden brown and crisp on the outside. Adjust the heat as needed so they brown without burning.

6. **Drain and serve.** Transfer the cooked bread meatballs to a paper towel-lined plate to drain any excess oil. Serve hot as an appetizer or side dish, or add them to gently simmering homemade tomato sauce for a softer, saucier version.

Squeeze excess milk from the bread so the mixture holds together. If the mixture is too wet, add a little Parmesan or breadcrumbs. Fry a small test piece first to check the seasoning and consistency. Turn gently to keep the bread meatballs from breaking apart.
Main Course, Side Dish
Italian
traditional Italian bread meatballs a

Spinach, Potato and Onion Frittata Muffins

Spinach, Potato and Onion Frittata Muffins

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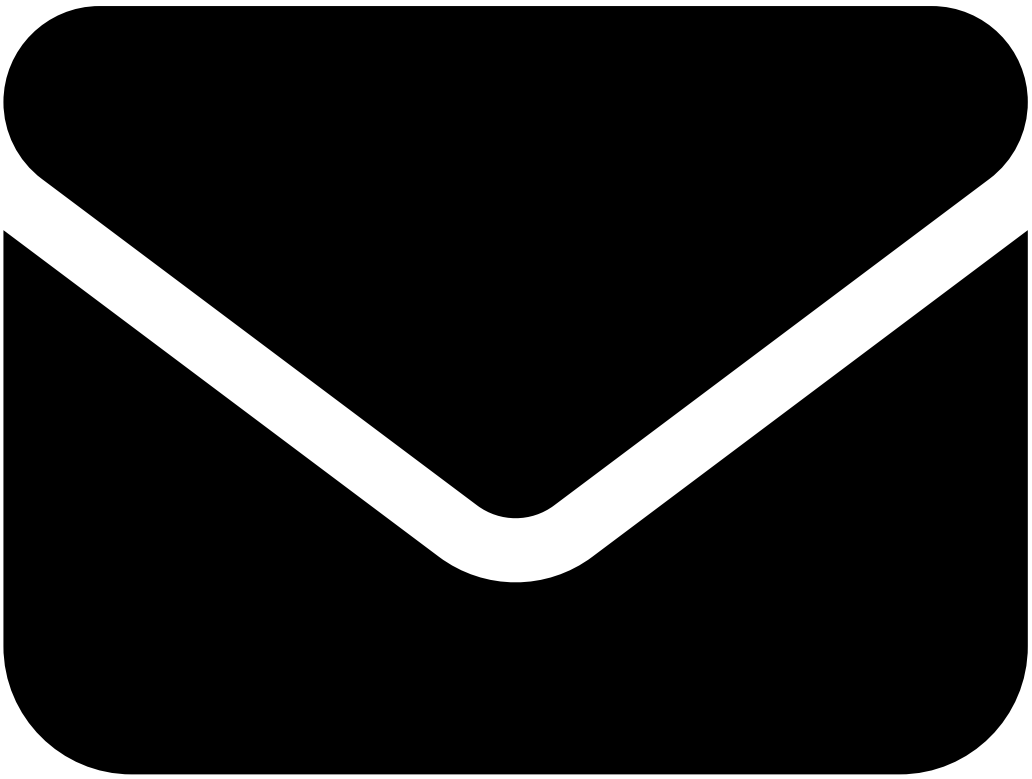




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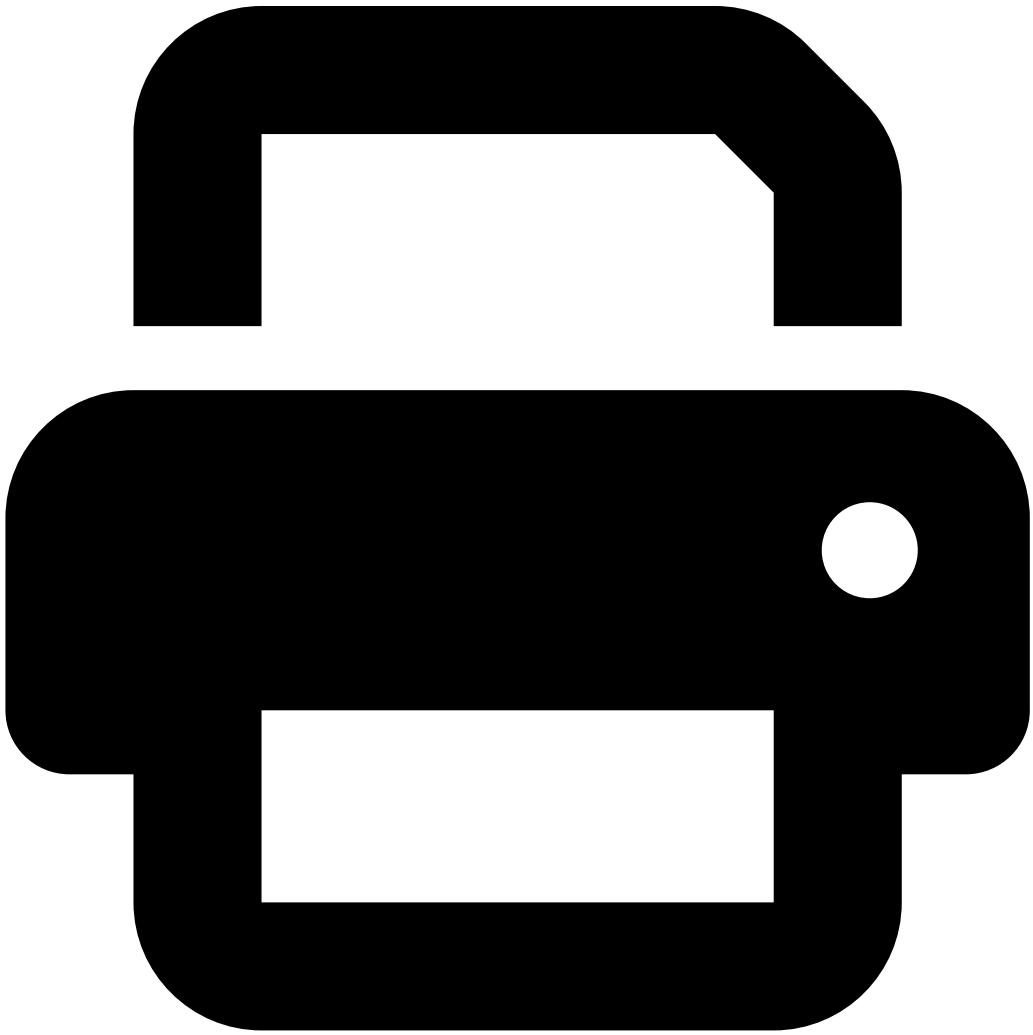

These Spinach, Potato and Onion Frittata Muffins are my easy way of turning a classic Italian frittata into individual, perfectly portioned servings. Baked in a muffin tin, they’re simple to make, easy to serve, and perfect for breakfast, brunch, or a buffet.

I make these with tender potatoes, sautéed onion, and cooked spinach, then add plenty of freshly grated Pecorino Romano for that salty, savory Italian flavor. The eggs and milk bring everything together into a light, tender frittata that bakes beautifully in individual portions. There’s no slicing or worrying about serving a large frittata. Just pull them from the muffin tin and serve.

Why You’ll Love These Frittata

Muffins

- **Easy to make:** Everything starts in one skillet before going into the oven.
- **Individual portions:** Perfect for breakfast, brunch, or entertaining.
- **Make-ahead friendly:** They can be prepared ahead and gently reheated.
- **A great way to use vegetables:** Spinach, potatoes, and onion make a hearty combination.
- **Perfect for entertaining:** They're easy to arrange on a platter and serve warm or at room temperature.

Things to know about this Frittata Muffin recipe

Don't overfill the muffin cups. The eggs will puff as they bake, so leave a little room at the top.

The potatoes need to be tender before adding them to the eggs. Since the frittatas only bake for about 30 minutes, start with potatoes that are already cooked through.

Watch the salt. Pecorino Romano is naturally salty, so season the egg mixture lightly and adjust if needed.

Don't worry if they puff up in the oven. They'll naturally settle a little as they cool.

Make Ahead and Storage

These frittata muffins are great for making ahead. Allow them to cool completely, then refrigerate in an airtight container for up to **3–4 days**.

Reheat gently in the microwave or in a 325°F oven until warmed through.

They can also be frozen. Cool completely, wrap individually, and place in a freezer-safe container. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before reheating.

Serving Suggestions

Serve these frittata muffins warm or at room temperature with a simple green salad, fresh fruit, crusty Italian bread, or alongside other brunch favorites.

They're also wonderful for a brunch buffet because guests can simply pick one up and enjoy.

A Little Italian Brunch Inspiration

Frittata has always been one of those wonderfully practical Italian dishes. It's an easy way to turn simple ingredients into something satisfying, and these individual versions take that same idea and make them especially convenient for entertaining.

Instead of making one large frittata and cutting it into wedges, baking them in a muffin tin gives everyone their own little portion — perfect for a relaxed brunch or a gathering where you want the food to be easy to eat and easy to serve.

More Italian Appetizers to Try

If you're putting together a brunch, buffet, or gathering, these individual frittata muffins are perfect alongside a few Italian appetizers. Serve them with classic **Bruschetta** , **Italian Marinated Fried Zucchini**, or **Whipped Baked Ricotta with Baked Cherry Tomatoes** for a simple spread filled with Italian flavor. If you love simple Italian recipes made with everyday ingredients, be sure to try some of my other favorites. My **traditional Italian frittata** is perfect when you want a classic, family-style version,

And because these frittatas are baked in individual portions, a good **12-cup muffin tin** is one of those kitchen tools you'll find yourself reaching for again and again. It's perfect for more than just muffins — use it for individual frittatas, savory bites, mini appetizers, and more.

Spinach, Potato and Onion Frittata Muffins



These easy Spinach, Potato and Onion Frittata Muffins are baked in a muffin tin for perfectly portioned servings. Made with eggs, tender potatoes, spinach, onion, and Pecorino Romano, they're delicious for breakfast, brunch, or as a savory appetizer.

- 12 large eggs
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Pecorino Romano
- 1/2 medium finely chopped
- 1 cup small diced potatoes
- 2 cups fresh spinach, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste

Cook the vegetables

Heat a little olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté until softened.

Add the diced potatoes and cook until the potatoes are tender and lightly golden. Stir in the chopped spinach and cook 5 minutes longer, just until Season with salt and pepper.

Set the vegetables aside to cool slightly.

2. ## Prepare the egg mixture

   In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, and grated Pecorino Romano. Season lightly with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

   Add the cooked vegetables to the egg mixture and stir until everything is evenly combined.

3. ## Fill the muffin tin

   Preheat the oven to **350°F**.

   Lightly oil a 12-cup muffin tin. Divide the frittata mixture evenly among the cups, filling each one about three-quarters full.

4. ## Bake

   Bake for approximately **25–30 minutes**, or until the frittatas are puffed, set in the center, and lightly golden around the edges.

   Let them rest for a few minutes before carefully removing them from the muffin tin.

1.

Let the frittatas cool for a few minutes before removing them from the muffin tin. They’ll release more easily and hold their shape better.
Appetizer, Side Dish
Italian
Frittata Muffins

Oven-Dried Garden Tomatoes in Olive Oil

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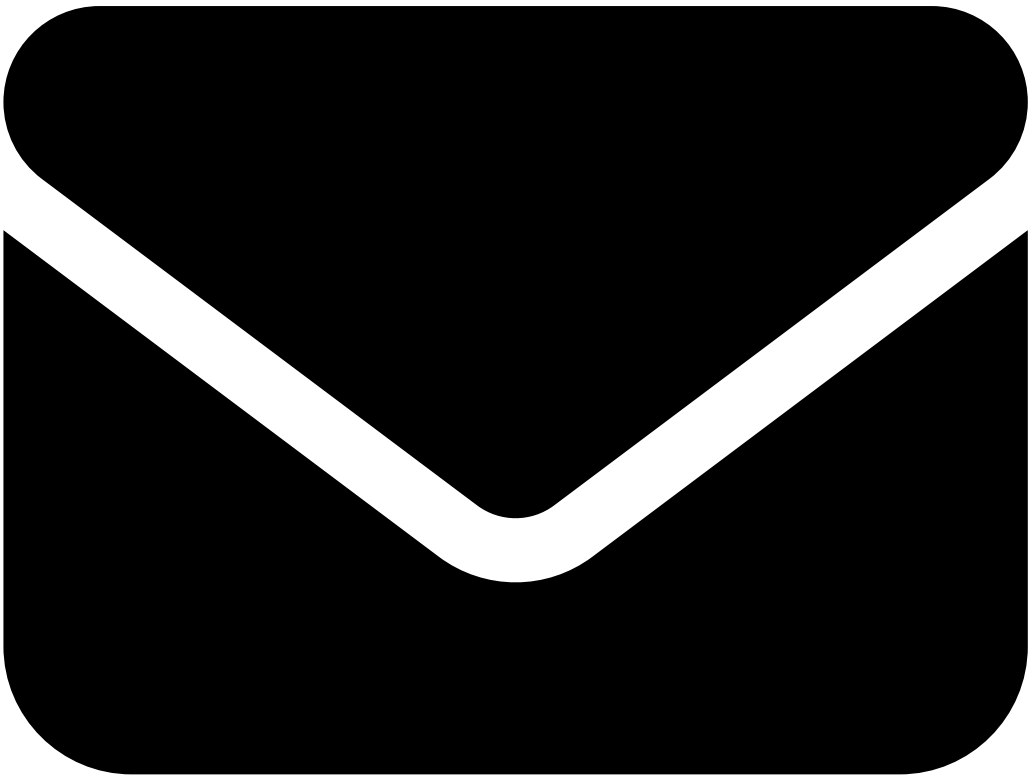




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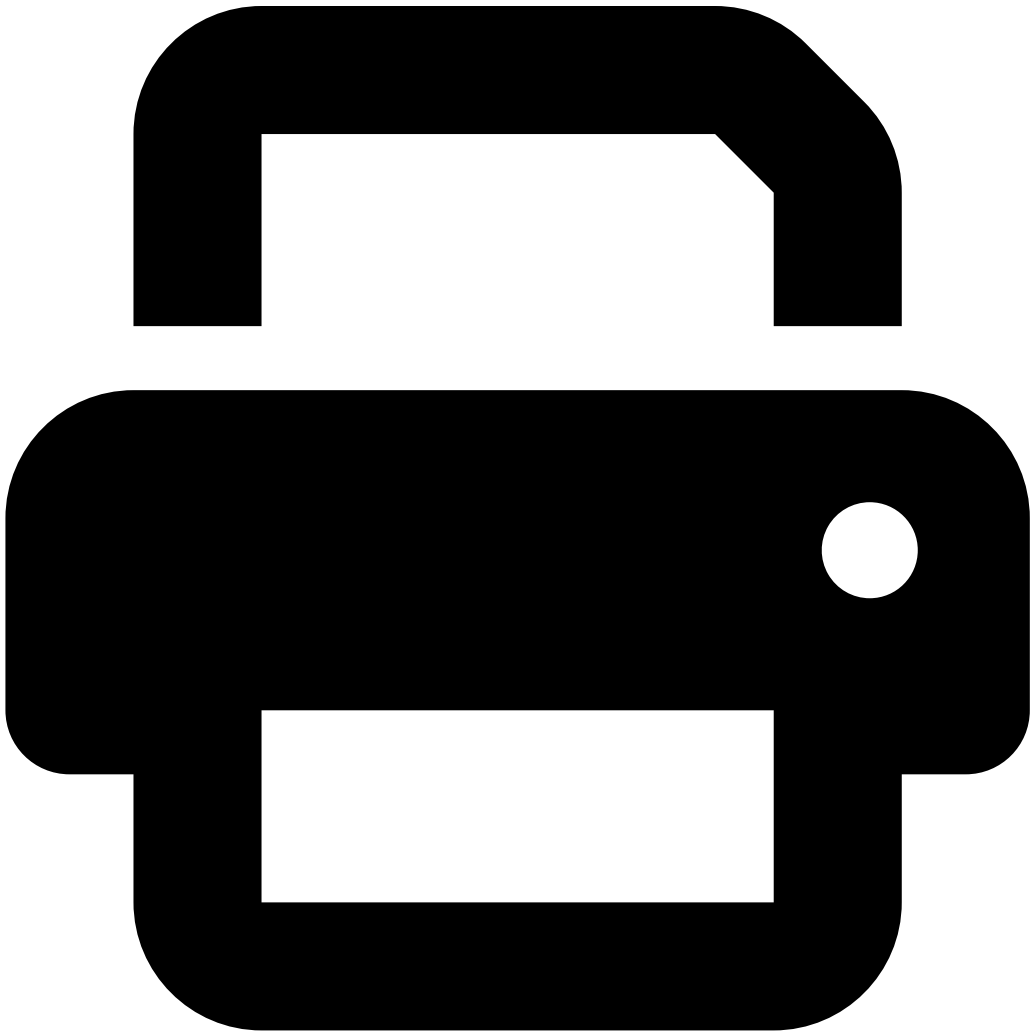

If you have more tomatoes from your garden than you know what to do with, these **oven-dried garden tomatoes** are one of my favorite ways to preserve them. They’re simple to make, packed with flavor, and so much better than anything you can buy at the store.

I used a variety of tomatoes picked fresh from my garden. Cherry tomatoes, Roma tomatoes, plum tomatoes, and other small garden varieties all work beautifully. The key is to cut them into pieces that are roughly the same size so they dry at about the same rate.

After the tomatoes are slowly dried in the oven, I pack them into jars with extra virgin olive oil and a little more oregano. The result is tender, intensely flavored tomatoes that are wonderful in pasta, salads, sandwiches, appetizers, or simply served with crusty Italian bread.

Why You'll Love These Oven-Dried Tomatoes

- A delicious way to use an abundance of garden tomatoes
- Easy to make with just a handful of ingredients
- Slow oven drying concentrates the natural sweetness of the tomatoes
- Wonderful for pasta, salads, sandwiches, bruschetta, and appetizers
- The olive oil becomes infused with tomato and oregano flavor

Things to know about this oven dried tomato recipe

Good to Know

The tomatoes will shrink considerably as they dry. Don't be surprised when a full baking sheet of fresh tomatoes turns into a much smaller amount. This is exactly what you want—the drying process concentrates the tomatoes' natural sweetness and flavor.

For the best results, don't overcrowd the baking sheet. Leave a little space between the tomatoes so the moisture can evaporate evenly. And since different varieties contain different amounts of water, some tomatoes may finish before others. Simply remove the ones that are ready and let the others continue drying.

Important: Tomatoes packed in oil should be refrigerated. This recipe is not intended as a shelf-stable canning method.

How to Use Oven-Dried Tomatoes

There are so many ways to enjoy these tomatoes. Try them:

- Tossed with pasta and Parmesan

- On bruschetta or crostini
- In sandwiches and panini
- Chopped into salads
- With fresh mozzarella
- On pizza
- Stirred into risotto
- Alongside grilled or roasted chicken
- Served with crusty Italian bread

And don’t throw away that tomato-infused olive oil! Use it to dress pasta, drizzle over vegetables, or make a simple vinaigrette.

More Italian-Inspired Recipes You’ll Love

If you have a garden full of summer produce, here are a few more recipes to try:

Homemade Italian roasted Tomato Sauce – A simple, flavorful sauce that’s perfect for pasta and so many Italian dishes.

Classic Bruschetta– Fresh tomatoes, good olive oil, and crusty bread make this an easy Italian appetizer.

Pasta al Forno– A comforting baked pasta that’s perfect for turning homemade tomato sauce into a hearty meal.

Spaghetti Aglio e Olio– One of the simplest Italian pasta dishes, made with garlic, olive oil, and pasta.

Italian Sausage, Peppers & Potatoes– A rustic, comforting dinner that’s perfect for a family meal.

Bring a Little Taste of Summer to Your Table

If you have tomatoes growing in your garden right now, don’t

let them go to waste. Dry a batch, pack them in olive oil, and enjoy that concentrated summer flavor in your favorite Italian-inspired dishes.

Looking for more easy, homemade Italian recipes? Browse the full recipe collection for more simple dishes made for home cooks.

Oven-Dried Garden Tomatoes in Olive Oil



These easy oven-dried tomatoes are made with fresh garden tomatoes, extra virgin olive oil, oregano, salt, and pepper. Slowly dried in the oven until concentrated and slightly chewy, they’re packed in olive oil for a delicious addition to pasta, salads, sandwiches, bruschetta, and more.

- 2-3 lbs. assorted fresh tomatoes
- 2 Tbsp. **extra virgin olive oil** for drizzling the tomatoes before drying.
- 1 Tbsp. dried oregano
- 1 1/2 cups Extra virgin olive oil, or enough to completely cover the tomatoes
- salt and pepper to taste

Prepare the tomatoes

Wash the tomatoes and dry them well. Cut them into pieces that are approximately the same size. If using larger tomatoes, cut them into wedges or smaller pieces. Smaller tomatoes can be halved.

Arrange the tomatoes in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet.

2. ## Season the tomatoes

Drizzle the tomatoes lightly with extra virgin olive oil. Season with salt, black pepper, and oregano.

You don't need a lot of oil at this stage—a light coating is all you need.

3. ## Slowly dry the tomatoes

Place the baking sheet in a **225°F oven** and slowly dry the tomatoes until they have lost much of their moisture and are concentrated and slightly chewy, but not completely hard or brittle.

Depending on the variety, size, and moisture content of your tomatoes, this can take approximately **4–7 hours**. Start checking them around the four-hour mark.

Because tomatoes vary so much, use their appearance and texture as your guide rather than relying strictly on the clock.

4. ## Cool the tomatoes

Remove the tomatoes from the oven and allow them to cool completely before packing them into jars.

1.

5. ## Pack the jars

   Place the dried tomatoes into clean jars. Sprinkle in a little additional dried oregano as you layer the tomatoes.

   Pour extra virgin olive oil over the tomatoes until they are completely covered.

   Make sure the tomatoes remain submerged beneath the oil.

6. ## Refrigerate

   Seal the jars and refrigerate.

   For the best quality, use the tomatoes within **about 1–2 weeks**. Always use a clean utensil when removing tomatoes from the jar, and discard them if you see mold, notice an off smell, or see other signs of spoilage.

Don’t try to dry all of your tomatoes to exactly the same texture. Different varieties contain different amounts of water, so some may finish before others. Remove the tomatoes as they reach that concentrated, slightly chewy texture and let the others continue drying.
Appetizer, Side Dish
Italian

Italian Peppers and Potatoes

(Peperoni e Patate)

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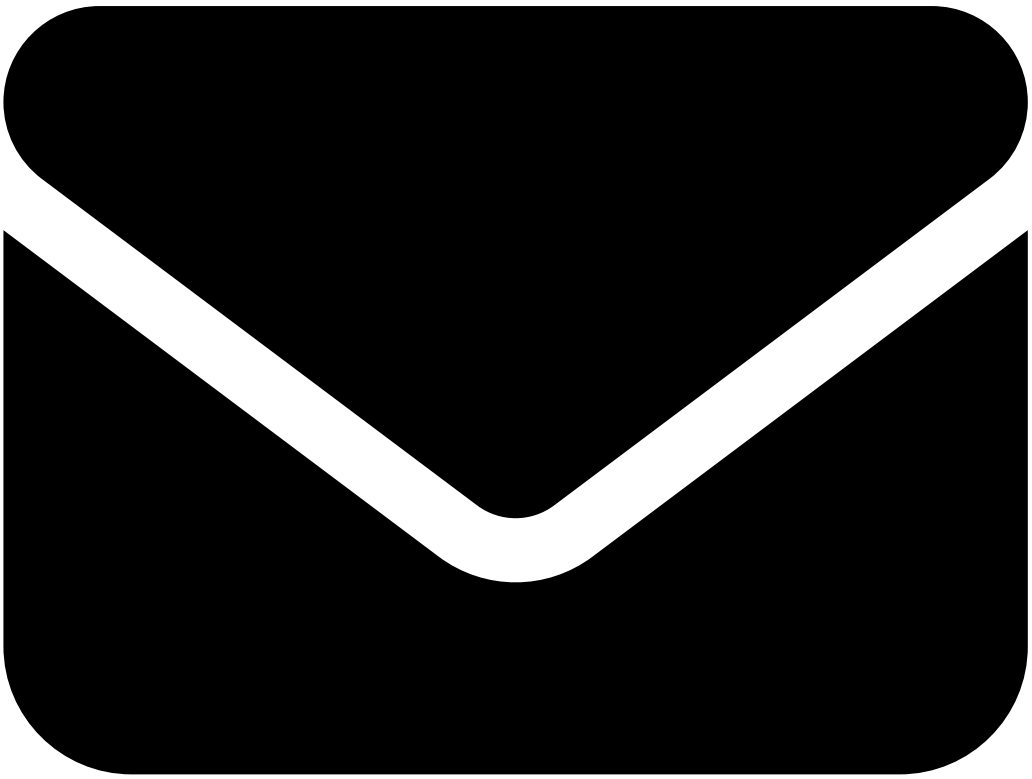




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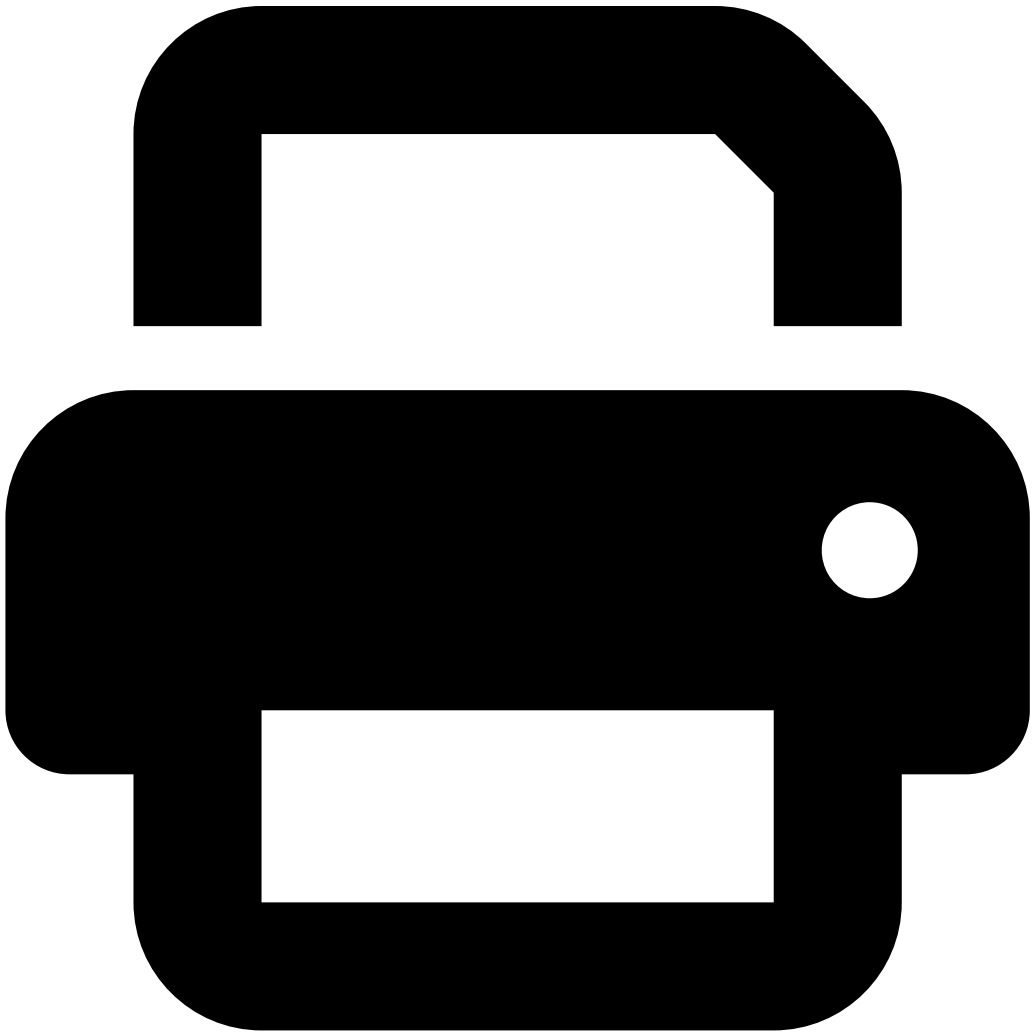

Some of the best Italian dishes are also the simplest. **Peperoni e Patate**, or Italian peppers and potatoes, is a rustic Southern Italian dish made with just a handful of everyday ingredients.

Golden potatoes, sweet peppers, and onions are slowly cooked in extra-virgin olive oil until the potatoes are crisp on the outside and tender inside, while the peppers become soft, sweet, and lightly caramelized. I like adding a handful of briny olives at the end for a little extra flavor.

This is the kind of Italian cooking I love most—simple ingredients, straightforward cooking, and a dish that tastes like you put much more effort into it than you actually did.

Serve these peppers and potatoes as a side dish with grilled chicken, roasted meats, or fish, or enjoy them on their own with crusty Italian bread.

Why You'll Love This Recipe

- Simple, everyday Italian ingredients
- Easy one-pan preparation
- Naturally vegetarian
- Wonderful as a side dish or light meal
- The perfect combination of crispy potatoes and tender, sweet peppers
- Makes a delicious addition to an Italian-style dinner

Things to know about this Italian Peppers and potato recipe

Choose the right potatoes. Yukon Gold or other waxy potatoes work especially well because they become creamy inside while developing a beautiful golden exterior.

Dry the potatoes well. Excess moisture will prevent them from browning properly. Pat them thoroughly dry before adding them to the skillet.

Don't overcrowd the pan. If the skillet is too crowded, the potatoes will steam instead of developing those crispy, golden edges. Use a large skillet or cook the potatoes in batches if necessary.

Let the vegetables brown. This isn't a dish you want to rush. Allowing the potatoes, peppers, and onions time to caramelize is what gives this simple dish so much flavor.

What about tomatoes? Some Italian families make versions of peppers and potatoes with tomatoes, but they aren't necessary for this preparation. Keeping the dish tomato-free lets the sweet peppers, golden potatoes, onions, olive oil, and olives shine.

Can I leave out the olives? Absolutely. Olives are a delicious addition, especially if you enjoy a salty, briny flavor, but the dish is delicious without them.

What to Serve with Italian Peppers and Potatoes

These rustic peppers and potatoes make an excellent side dish for almost any Italian-inspired meal. Serve them alongside Italian chicken breast pomodoro , grilled meats, roasted chicken, or simply with crusty bread.

They’re also delicious served with fish. Try them alongside **Italian Dover Sole in Lemon Wine Sauce** for a simple Italian dinner.

Looking for more rustic Italian side dishes? My **Italian Crispy Roasted Potatoes** are another easy favorite.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I make Italian peppers and potatoes ahead of time?

Yes. You can prepare them a few hours ahead and reheat them gently in a skillet. For the best texture, I recommend serving them the same day.

Can I use different peppers?

Absolutely. Sweet Italian peppers, bell peppers, or small sweet snap peppers all work well. A combination of colors makes the finished dish especially beautiful.

Can I add garlic?

You can, although I prefer to keep this particular version simple. The olive oil, onions, peppers, potatoes, and olives provide plenty of flavor.

Are Italian peppers and potatoes vegetarian?

Yes. This recipe is naturally vegetarian and vegan as written.

Final Thoughts

I love recipes like this because they prove that Italian cooking doesn’t have to be complicated. A few good ingredients, cooked properly in olive oil, can create something incredibly satisfying. **Peperoni e Patate** is rustic, unfussy, and perfect for the kind of everyday Italian

cooking that belongs on the family table.

If you make this recipe, I hope you’ll leave a comment and let me know how you served it. And if you love simple Italian recipes as much as I do, be sure to explore more of my **Italian-inspired recipes** for easy meals made with ingredients you can find at your local grocery store.

Italian Peppers and Potatoes (Peperoni e Patate)



This rustic Italian Peppers and Potatoes recipe combines golden, crispy potatoes with sweet peppers, caramelized onions, and briny olives. Made with simple ingredients and cooked in one skillet, it’s an easy Southern Italian side dish that pairs beautifully with chicken, fish, or roasted meats.

- 1 1/2 lbs. Yukon Gold or other waxy potatoes
- 1 1/2 lbs. small sweet peppers, such as snap peppers
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
- 1/2 cup pitted black olives, preferably Kalamata or Gaeta, optional
- salt and pepper to taste

1. **Prepare the potatoes:** Peel the potatoes and cut them into roughly 1-inch chunks. Rinse and pat them very dry.
2. **Prepare the peppers:** Wash the peppers, remove the stems and seeds if necessary, and cut larger peppers in half. Small snap peppers can be left whole or halved lengthwise.
3. **Brown the potatoes:** Heat the olive oil in a large, wide skillet over medium-high heat. Add the potatoes in a single layer. Season with salt and pepper and cook for about 10–12 minutes, turning occasionally, until they begin to develop a golden crust.
4. **Add the onion and peppers:** Add the sliced onion and peppers. Reduce the heat to medium and continue cooking

for 15–20 minutes, turning occasionally, until the potatoes are tender and the peppers are soft and lightly charred.

5. **Add the olives:** If using, stir in the olives during the last 3–5 minutes of cooking
6. Taste for salt and pepper and drizzle with a little more extra-virgin olive oil before serving.

For perfectly golden potatoes, make sure they are completely dry before adding them to the hot olive oil, and avoid overcrowding the skillet. This allows the potatoes to brown and crisp instead of steaming.

Main Course, Side Dish
Italian
Italian peppers and potatoes

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15 Italian Tomato Recipes to Make with Fresh Summer Tomatoes

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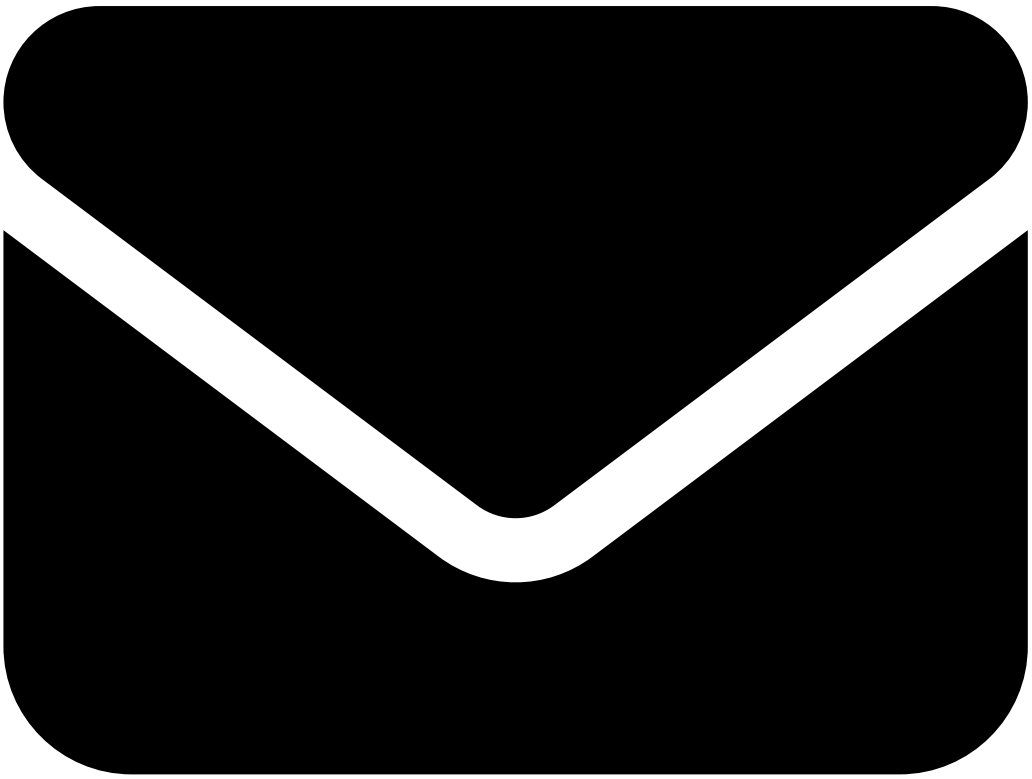




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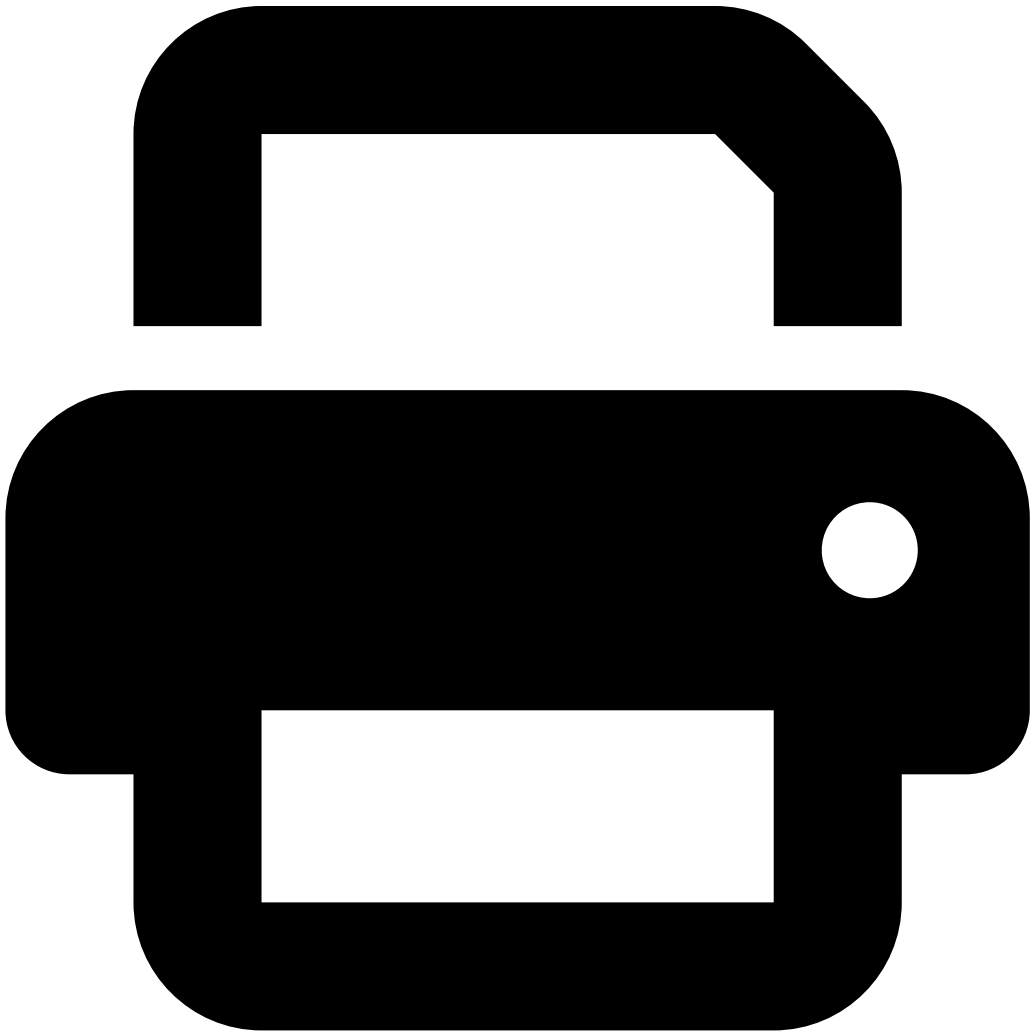

August is tomato season, and there is nothing quite like a perfectly ripe summer tomato. Juicy, sweet, and full of flavor, fresh tomatoes are one of the ingredients I look forward to most this time of year.

Growing up in Italy, tomatoes were a part of summer cooking in so many different ways. Sometimes they were the star of the dish, and other times they were simply combined with a few other seasonal ingredients to create something delicious.

That’s the beauty of Italian cooking: when your ingredients are at their best, you don’t need to do much to them.

If your garden is overflowing with tomatoes right now, or you just brought home a beautiful basket from the farmers market, these Italian tomato recipes are a delicious way to enjoy them while they’re at their peak.

From simple tomato salads and bruschetta to pasta, baked

tomatoes, and easy summer dinners, here are 15 Italian-inspired recipes to make this August.

Easy Italian Tomato Salad with Heirloom Tomatoes

When summer tomatoes are perfectly ripe, sometimes the simplest preparation is the best. This Italian tomato salad combines juicy heirloom tomatoes with fresh basil, oregano, olive oil, salt, and pepper. It’s an easy summer side dish that lets the tomatoes do all the work.GO TO RECIPE

Classic Italian Tomato Bruschetta

Fresh tomatoes, basil, garlic, good olive oil, and toasted rustic bread come together in this classic Italian bruschetta. It’s one of those recipes that is especially delicious in August, when tomatoes are sweet and at their peak.

GO TO RECIPE

Caprese Spaghetti with Roasted Tomato Sauce

This pasta combines roasted summer tomatoes, garlic, fresh mozzarella, basil, and spaghetti. Roasting the tomatoes concentrates their sweetness and creates a flavorful sauce that’s perfect for a summer pasta dinner.GO TO RECIPE

Oven-Baked Tomatoes Oreganata

This is one of my favorite ways to use an abundance of summer tomatoes. Ripe tomatoes are topped with seasoned breadcrumbs, Parmesan, garlic, oregano, and olive oil, then baked until

tender and golden.

It’s simple, rustic Italian cooking at its best.GO TO RECIPE

Authentic Italian Stuffed Tomatoes with Rice and Potatoes

Known as *Pomodori Ripieni di Riso*, these Roman-style stuffed tomatoes are filled with rice, garlic, basil, and the tomatoes’ own juices, then baked with potatoes underneath.

The potatoes soak up all those delicious tomato juices, making this a complete and satisfying summer meal.GO TO RECIPE

Sugo Crudo – No-Cook Italian Tomato Sauce

When summer tomatoes are at their peak, this simple *Sugo Crudo* is one of the best ways to enjoy them. This no-cook Italian tomato sauce combines ripe tomatoes with olive oil, garlic, and fresh basil for a fresh, vibrant sauce that lets the natural sweetness of the tomatoes shine.

It’s delicious tossed with pasta or served with crusty bread for an easy taste of Italian summer.GO TO RECIPE

Authentic Pasta Portofino

Pasta Portofino brings together two of summer’s best flavors: fresh tomatoes and basil pesto. Cherry tomatoes create a light sauce that’s tossed with spaghetti, basil, pine nuts, and Parmigiano Reggiano.

It’s bright, simple, and ready in about 30 minutes.GO TO RECIPE

One-Pan Italian Chicken with Peppers and Tomatoes

Tender chicken, sweet peppers, juicy cherry tomatoes, garlic, and marinara come together in one skillet in this easy Italian-inspired dinner. Fresh mozzarella is added at the end for a melty finish.

It’s exactly the kind of simple meal that’s perfect for summer.GO TO RECIPE

Italian Chicken Breast Pomodoro

Chicken and tomatoes are a natural combination, and this easy Chicken Pomodoro is a great way to enjoy them together. The tomato-based sauce keeps the chicken tender while adding plenty of fresh Italian flavor.GO TO RECIPE

Italian Green Beans and Tomatoes

This is a classic Italian summer side dish that I grew up eating. Fresh green beans are gently cooked with tomatoes, garlic, onion, olive oil, and Italian parsley until everything comes together into a simple, flavorful dish.

It’s especially good when both the tomatoes and green beans are coming straight from the garden.GO TO RECIPE

Italian Potatoes, Tomatoes and Green Beans

Another simple Italian vegetable dish that makes the most of summer produce. Potatoes and green beans are combined with tomatoes, garlic, onion, olive oil, and marinara for a rustic side dish that can easily become a light meal.GO TO RECIPE

Ciambotta Italian summer vegetable Stew

Zucchini, potatoes, and tomatoes come together in this easy Italian vegetable stew. The tomatoes create a light, flavorful sauce while fresh parsley finishes the dish.

It’s a wonderful example of how Italian cooking turns a few seasonal vegetables into something satisfying.GO TO RECIPE

Traditional Melanzane a Funghetto

This Neapolitan eggplant dish is another wonderful way to use summer tomatoes. Eggplant and tomatoes come together in a simple preparation that’s full of Southern Italian flavor.

It’s rustic, seasonal, and exactly the kind of dish I love making when summer vegetables are abundant.GO TO RECIPE

Cod Puttanesca

Flaky cod simmered in a bold Italian tomato sauce with olives, capers, garlic, and anchovy makes this a quick and flavorful summer dinner.

The bright tomato sauce gives the delicate fish plenty of flavor without making the dish feel heavy.GO TO RECIPE

Italian Orecchiette with Sausage and Cherry Tomatoes

This Italian Orecchiette with Sausage and Cherry Tomatoes is an easy, flavorful pasta that makes the most of sweet summer cherry tomatoes. Juicy tomatoes are cooked with Italian sausage and tossed with orecchiette for a satisfying pasta

dinner that comes together with simple ingredients.

It’s hearty enough for a weeknight meal but still feels light and summery thanks to the fresh cherry tomatoes.

Tips for Choosing the Best Summer Tomatoes

The best tomato recipes start with the best tomatoes. Look for tomatoes that are fragrant, heavy for their size, and ripe without being overly soft.

For salads and bruschetta, I love using heirloom or vine-ripened tomatoes. Roma and plum tomatoes are excellent for sauces and baked dishes because they have a firmer texture and less water.

And when tomatoes are truly at their peak, don’t overcomplicate them. Good olive oil, fresh basil, garlic, salt, and pepper can be all you need.

How to Store Fresh Tomatoes

Keep tomatoes at room temperature until they’re ripe and ready to eat. I prefer not to refrigerate them because the cold can affect their flavor and texture.

If you have more tomatoes than you can use, make a batch of fresh tomato sauce, roast them, or preserve them so you can enjoy that summer flavor later.

Make the Most of Tomato Season

August is the time to take advantage of fresh tomatoes while they’re at their sweetest and most flavorful.

Whether you’re making a simple tomato salad, piling tomatoes

onto crusty bread for bruschetta, tossing them with pasta, or turning a basketful into homemade tomato sauce, these recipes are all about keeping things simple and letting seasonal ingredients shine.

So grab those summer tomatoes and start cooking. **Italian summer cooking doesn’t have to be complicated—it just needs good ingredients.**GO TO RECIPE

Traditional Melanzane a Funghetto (Neapolitan Eggplant with Tomatoes)

Traditional Melanzane a Funghetto (Neapolitan Eggplant with Tomatoes)

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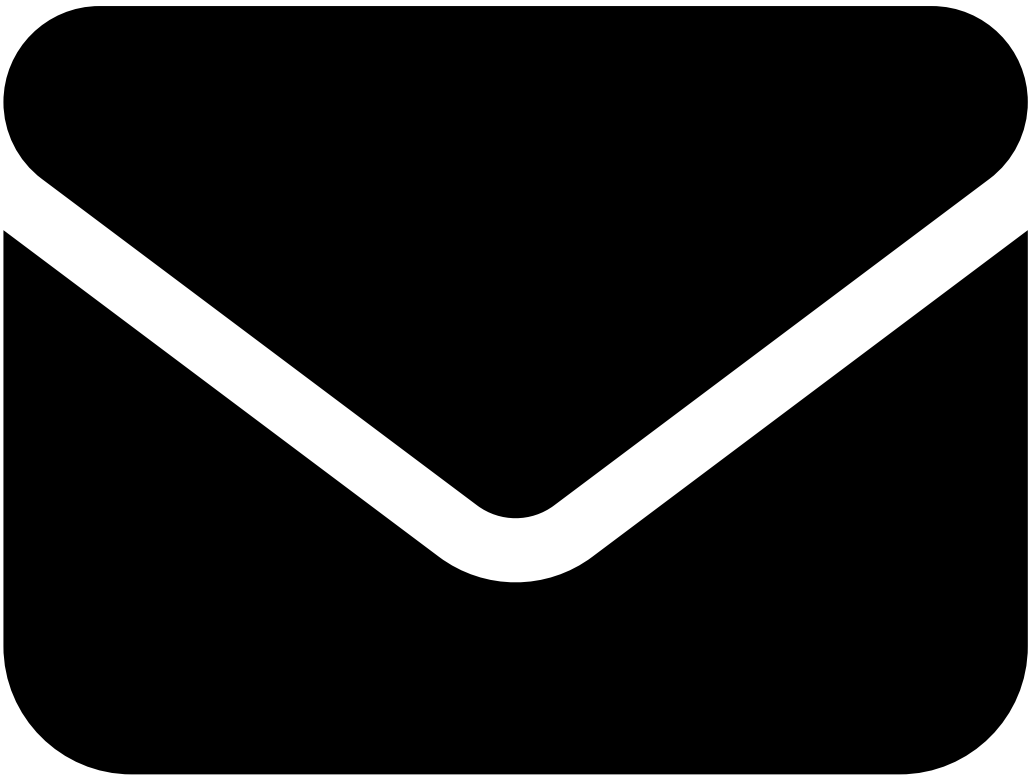




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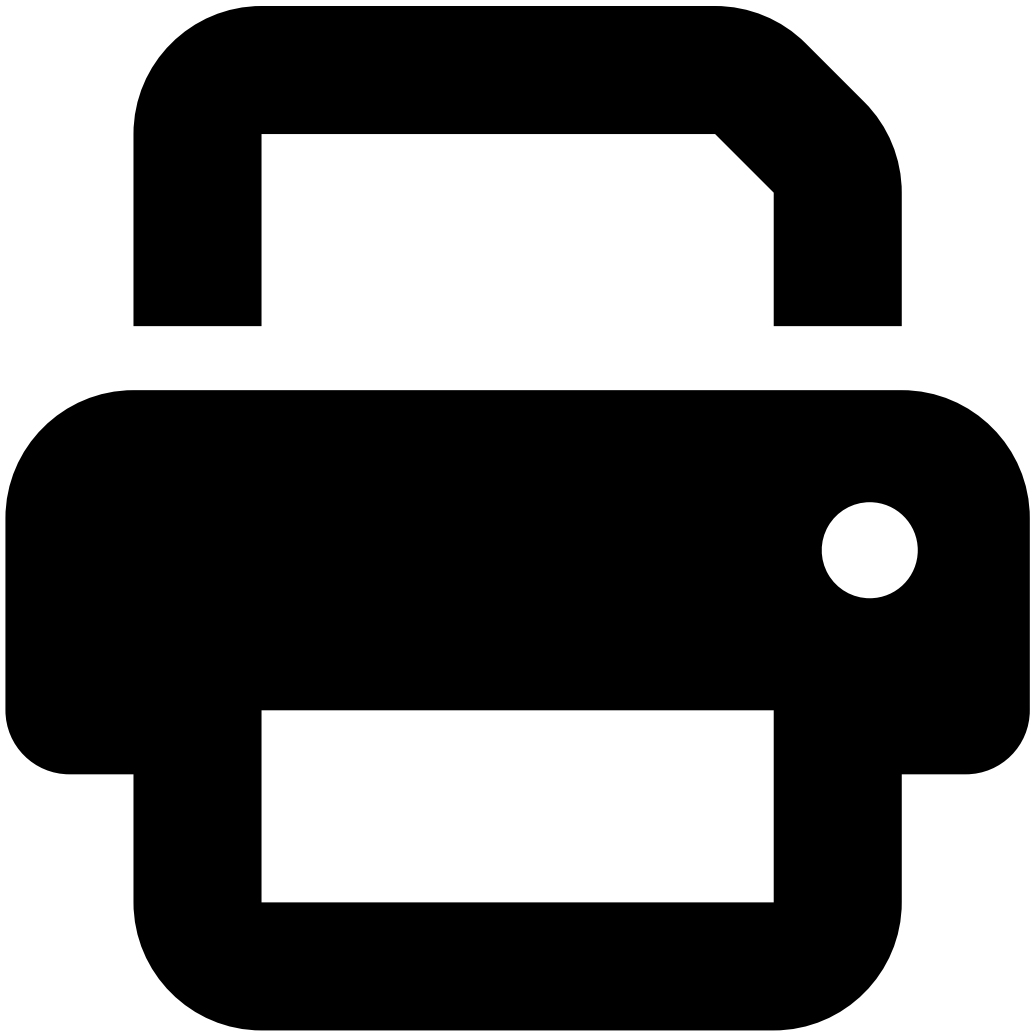

Some of the best Italian recipes are the ones you've probably never heard of. **Melanzane a Funghetto** is a traditional Neapolitan dish that transforms humble ingredients—eggplant, tomatoes, garlic, fresh basil, and extra virgin olive oil—into something incredibly rich and flavorful. The name translates to **"mushroom-style eggplant,"** referring to the way the tender cubes of eggplant resemble sautéed mushrooms as they cook.

Although I was born in Italy, I didn't grow up eating this particular dish. One of the things I love most about Italian cuisine is that every region has its own traditions and family recipes, many of which are virtually unknown outside their hometowns. Discovering dishes like this reminds me that Italian cooking is wonderfully regional, with every recipe telling the story of the place it comes from.

This authentic Neapolitan recipe is proof that you don't need complicated ingredients to make an unforgettable meal. Serve

it with crusty Italian bread, alongside grilled meats or fish, or toss it with pasta for a simple dinner that tastes like summer in southern Italy.

Things to know about this Neapolitan Eggplant with Tomato recipe

- **Choose firm, glossy eggplants** for the best texture. Smaller Italian eggplants tend to have fewer seeds and less bitterness.
- **Use ripe summer tomatoes** whenever possible. Fresh San Marzano or Roma tomatoes create the sweetest, richest sauce.
- **Don’t rush the browning. use the right size pan** Let the eggplant caramelize before adding the tomatoes. This develops the deep flavor that makes the dish special.
- **Fresh basil is essential.** Stir it in at the end so it stays bright and fragrant.
- **It gets even better overnight.** The flavors meld beautifully, making leftovers just as delicious.
- **Serve it warm or at room temperature.** That’s how it’s often enjoyed in southern Italy.

Storage

Refrigerator:
Store leftover **Melanzane a Funghetto** in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to **4 days**. The flavors continue to develop as it sits, making it even more delicious the next day.

Freezer:
Allow the dish to cool completely, then transfer it to a freezer-safe container. Freeze for up to **3 months**. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before reheating.

Reheating:
Warm gently in a skillet over medium-low heat or in the microwave until heated through. If the sauce has thickened, add a splash of water or a drizzle of olive oil to loosen it.

Chef’s Tip:
This dish is also wonderful served at **room temperature**, just as it’s often enjoyed in southern Italy. It’s perfect as part of an antipasto platter or spooned over toasted Italian bread.

More Traditional Italian Vegetable Recipes

If you enjoyed this recipe, be sure to try:

- Ciambotta (Italian Zucchini and Potato Stew) A rustic southern Italian vegetable stew made with zucchini, potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant, and fresh herbs that’s perfect for summer.
- Italian Marinated Fried Zucchini (Zucchini alla Scapece) Crispy fried zucchini marinated with garlic, vinegar, mint, and olive oil for a classic Neapolitan side dish.
- **Calabrian Zucchini Fritters** – Golden, crispy zucchini fritters from Calabria made with simple pantry ingredients and full of authentic Italian flavor.
- **Eggplant Parmigiana** – Layers of tender eggplant, rich tomato sauce, mozzarella, and Parmesan baked until bubbly and golden.
- **Pasta alla Norma** – Sicily’s famous pasta dish featuring fried eggplant, tomato sauce, fresh basil, and salty ricotta salata for the perfect summer meal.

Melanzane a Funghetto (Neapolitan Eggplant with Tomatoes)



Melanzane a Funghetto is a traditional Neapolitan eggplant recipe made with tender eggplant, ripe tomatoes, garlic, fresh basil, and extra virgin olive oil. This simple, rustic Italian side dish is full of authentic Mediterranean flavor and can be served with crusty bread, grilled meats, or tossed with pasta for an easy meal.

- 2 medium zebra peeled eggplants (about 2 pounds), cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil (plus more if needed)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 lb. ripe Roma or San Marzano tomatoes, diced (or one 28-ounce can whole San Marzano tomatoes, crushed by hand)
- 8-10 leaves fresh basil torn
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes (optional)
- salt and pepper to taste

1. ## Prepare the eggplant

   Cut the eggplant into 1-inch cubes. If your eggplant is very mature or bitter, sprinkle it with salt and let it

sit in a colander for 30 minutes. Rinse and pat dry.

2. ## Brown the eggplant

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

   Add the eggplant in a single layer and cook for about 10–12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until browned and tender. If the pan becomes dry, drizzle in a little more olive oil.

3. ## Build the sauce

   Reduce the heat to medium.

   Add the garlic and cook for about 30 seconds until fragrant.

   Stir in the tomatoes, salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes if using.

   Simmer for 12–15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes break down and coat the eggplant.

4. ## Finish

   Turn off the heat and stir in the fresh basil.

   Taste and adjust the seasoning.

   Serve warm or at room temperature with crusty Italian bread, grilled meat, or spooned over pasta.

Side Dish
Italian
Melanzane a Funghetto Neapolitan Eggplant Recipe

15 Italian Zucchini Recipes You’ll Make All Summer

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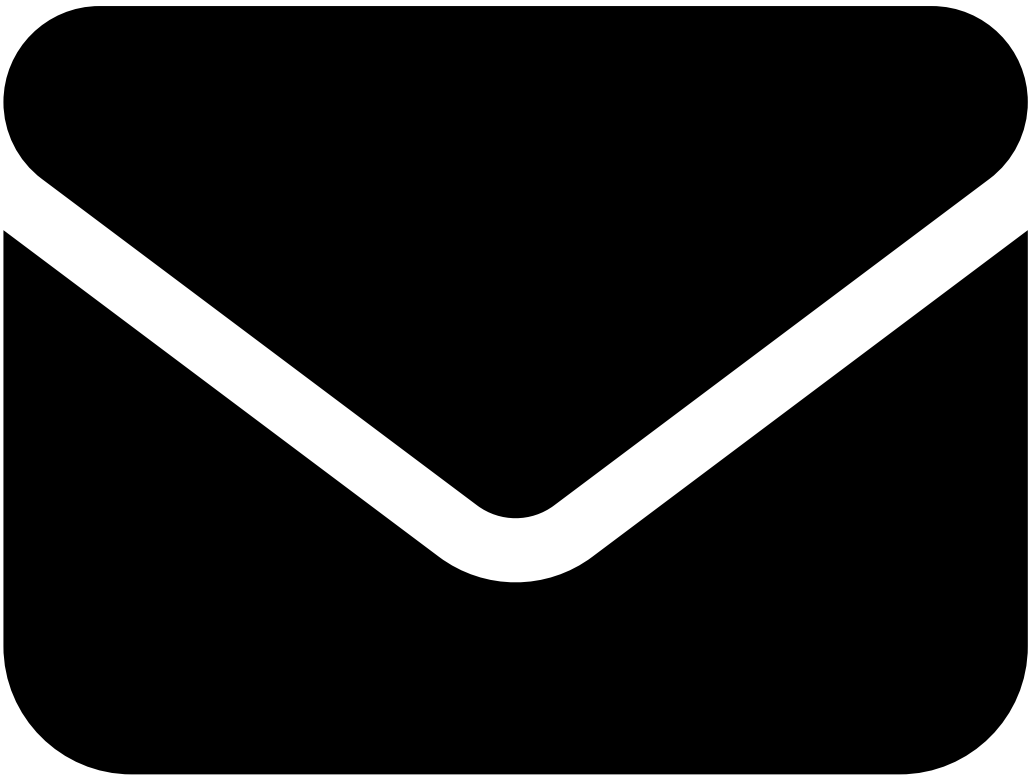




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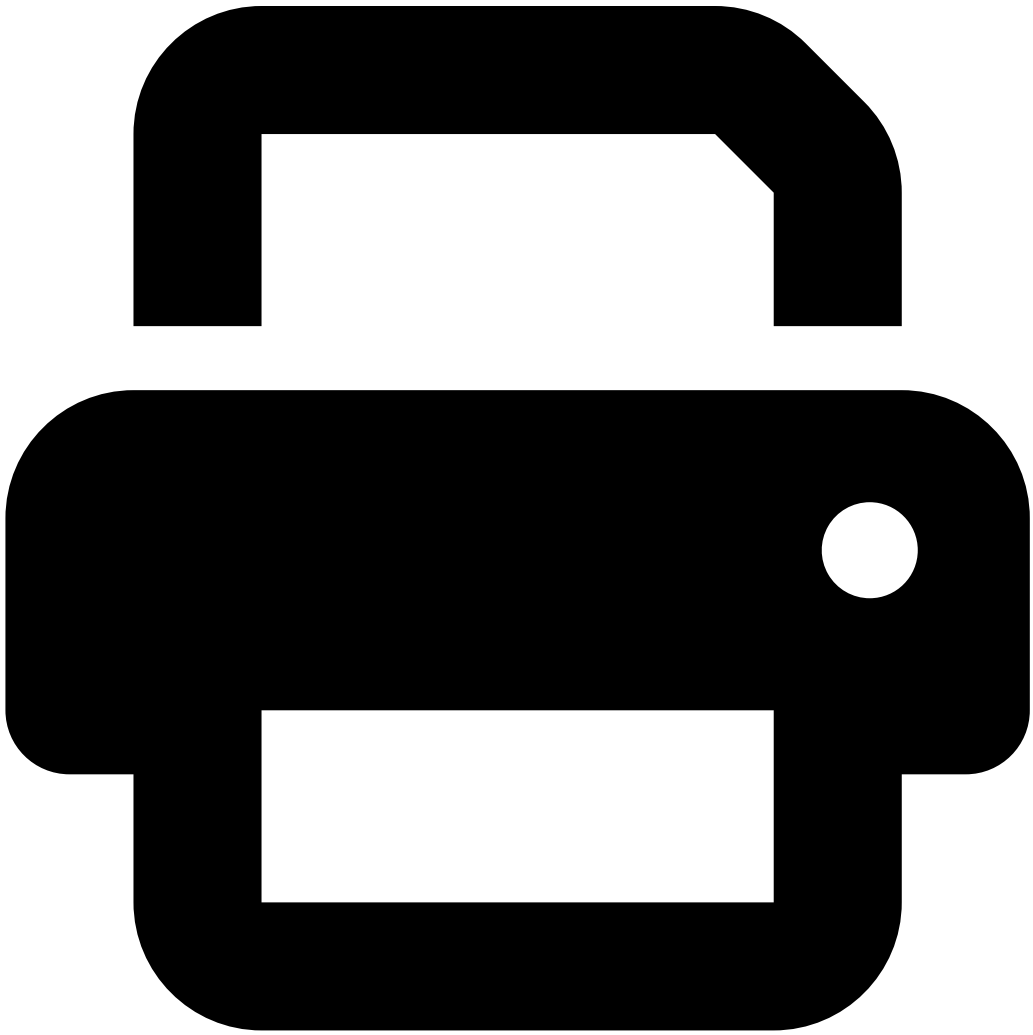

If your garden is overflowing with zucchini—or you've picked up a few too many at the farmers market—you're in the right place. Zucchini is one of summer's most versatile vegetables, and in Italian cooking, it's used in everything from fresh salads and simple side dishes to hearty pastas and comforting baked meals.

Growing up in Tuscany, zucchini was always a part of our summer table. It wasn't dressed up with complicated ingredients. A little good olive oil, fresh herbs, garlic, and Parmesan were often all it needed. Those simple flavors are still the inspiration behind many of the recipes I make today.

After spending more than 40 years in the restaurant business, I've learned that the best recipes don't have to be complicated. These Italian-inspired zucchini recipes are easy enough for busy weeknights, beautiful enough for entertaining, and full of the fresh flavors of summer.

Whether you’re looking for a light lunch, a hearty dinner, or the perfect side dish, this collection has something for everyone.

Easy Roasted Zucchini Salad with Feta

This fresh and colorful zucchini salad is the perfect summer side dish. Roasted zucchini is paired with creamy feta, fresh herbs, and a light vinaigrette for an easy recipe that’s equally at home at a backyard barbecue or an elegant Italian dinner table.GO TO RECIPE

One-Pot Creamy Zucchini Pasta (Pasta e Zucchini)

This comforting Pasta e Zucchini is a traditional Italian favorite that’s creamy without being heavy. Everything cooks together in one pot, allowing the zucchini to melt into the sauce for an easy weeknight meal full of authentic Italian flavor.GO TO RECIPE

Crispy Fried Zucchini Flowers (Non-Stuffed)

A true Italian summer delicacy, these crispy fried zucchini flowers feature a light, golden batter that lets the delicate flavor of the blossoms shine. They’re simple to make and perfect as an appetizer or served alongside your favorite Italian meal.GO TO RECIPE

Classic Zucchini alla Scapece (Neapolitan Marinated Zucchini)

Thin slices of zucchini are lightly fried and marinated with garlic, fresh mint, vinegar, and olive oil in this classic recipe from Naples. It’s a refreshing make-ahead side dish that tastes even better after the flavors have had time to mingle.GO TO RECIPE

Vegetarian Zucchini and Tomato Pasta

Fresh zucchini, juicy summer tomatoes, garlic, basil, and Parmesan come together in this simple vegetarian pasta that’s ready in about 30 minutes. It’s a light yet satisfying dinner that celebrates the best flavors of the season.GO TO RECIPE

Zucchini Lasagna with Bolognese Sauce

Layers of tender zucchini, rich homemade Bolognese sauce, creamy béchamel, and melted cheese make this lasagna a comforting twist on a classic Italian favorite. It’s perfect for family dinners, special occasions, or whenever you’re craving a hearty meal with plenty of garden-fresh flavor.GO TO RECIPE

Easy Vegetarian zucchini fritters

These crispy zucchini fritters are made with fresh zucchini, Parmesan cheese, herbs, and a handful of pantry staples. Golden on the outside and tender on the inside, they’re

perfect as an appetizer, light lunch, or flavorful side dish.

GO TO RECIPE

Baked vegetarian zucchini meatballs

These baked zucchini meatballs are a delicious vegetarian twist on a classic. Made with grated zucchini, breadcrumbs, Parmesan, and fresh herbs, they’re crispy on the outside, tender in the center, and perfect served with marinara or as a meatless main course.GO TO RECIPE

Crispy Zucchini scarpaccia

This traditional Tuscan zucchini scarpaccia is a savory zucchini tart with crisp, golden edges and a tender center. Made with thinly sliced zucchini, onions, Parmesan, and a simple batter, it’s an easy recipe that showcases the fresh flavors of summer.GO TO RECIPE

Vegetarian Zucchini Roll-Ups

Thin slices of zucchini are rolled around a creamy ricotta filling, topped with marinara sauce and mozzarella, then baked until bubbly and golden. This lighter take on classic Italian comfort food is perfect for weeknight dinners or entertaining.GO TO RECIPE

Zucchini ricotta penne pasta

Creamy ricotta, tender zucchini, and perfectly cooked penne come together in this simple Italian-inspired pasta. Finished with fresh basil and Parmesan, it’s a quick and satisfying

meal that’s ready in about 30 minutes.GO TO RECIPE

Italian zucchini potato stew

This rustic Italian stew combines tender zucchini, potatoes, tomatoes, garlic, and herbs in a comforting one-pot meal. It’s a simple, budget-friendly recipe that’s perfect for using up fresh summer vegetables.GO TO RECIPE

Spaghetti alla Nerano

One of Italy’s most beloved zucchini pasta dishes, Spaghetti alla Nerano features golden fried zucchini, al dente spaghetti, fresh basil, and plenty of cheese for a silky, flavorful sauce. Originating on the Amalfi Coast, this classic recipe proves that a few simple ingredients can create an unforgettable meal.GO TO RECIPE

Roasted Zucchini Panzanella Salad

This Italian-inspired panzanella gives the classic bread salad a delicious summer twist. Roasted zucchini, juicy tomatoes, toasted bread, fresh basil, and a tangy vinaigrette come together for a hearty salad that’s perfect for lunch, dinner, or entertaining.GO TO RECIPE

Creamy Lemon Parmesan Zucchini Orzo

This creamy lemon Parmesan zucchini orzo is bright, comforting, and full of fresh summer flavor. Tender orzo, sautéed zucchini, fresh lemon, and Parmesan create a silky one-pan dish that works beautifully as a light main course or alongside grilled chicken, seafood, or your favorite Italian entrées.GO TO RECIPE

Final Thoughts

Zucchini is one of those humble vegetables that proves simple ingredients can create some of the most memorable meals. From classic Italian recipes passed down through generations to fresh, modern dishes inspired by summer's abundance, there are so many delicious ways to enjoy zucchini.

Whether you're looking for a quick weeknight pasta, a light summer salad, a comforting baked dish, or a new way to use up garden zucchini, these Italian zucchini recipes are full of flavor and easy enough to make at home.

I hope this collection inspires you to bring more zucchini to your table this summer. Save this page, share it with someone who loves Italian food, and come back as new zucchini recipes are added to this collection.

Easy Roasted Zucchini Salad with Feta

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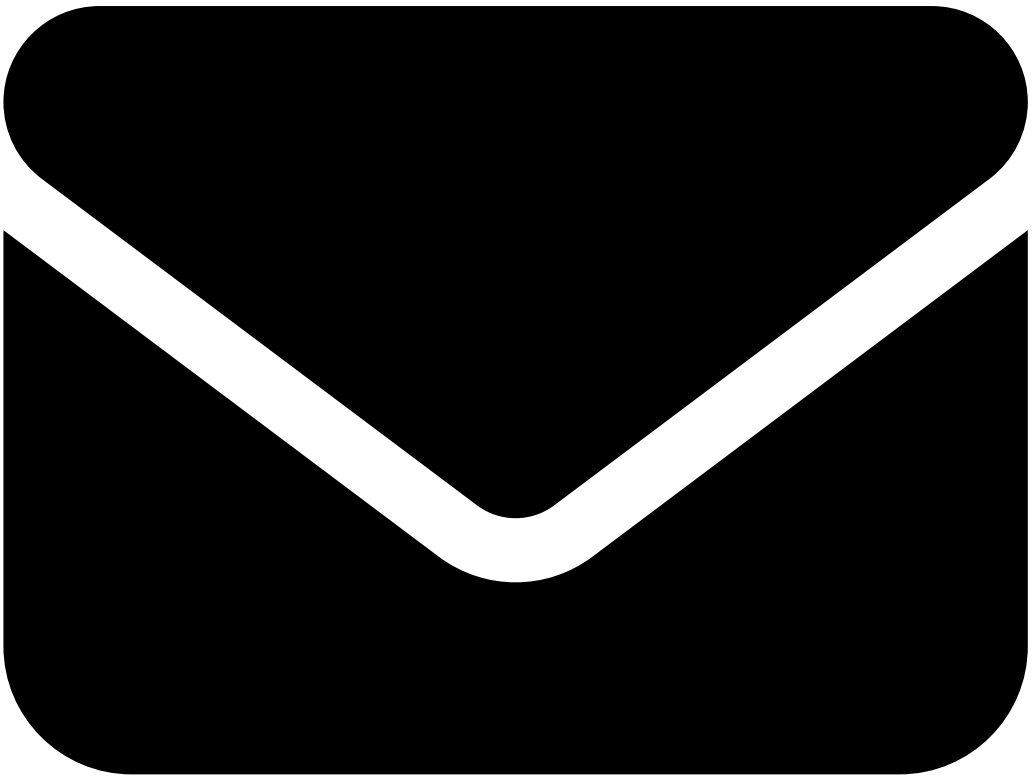




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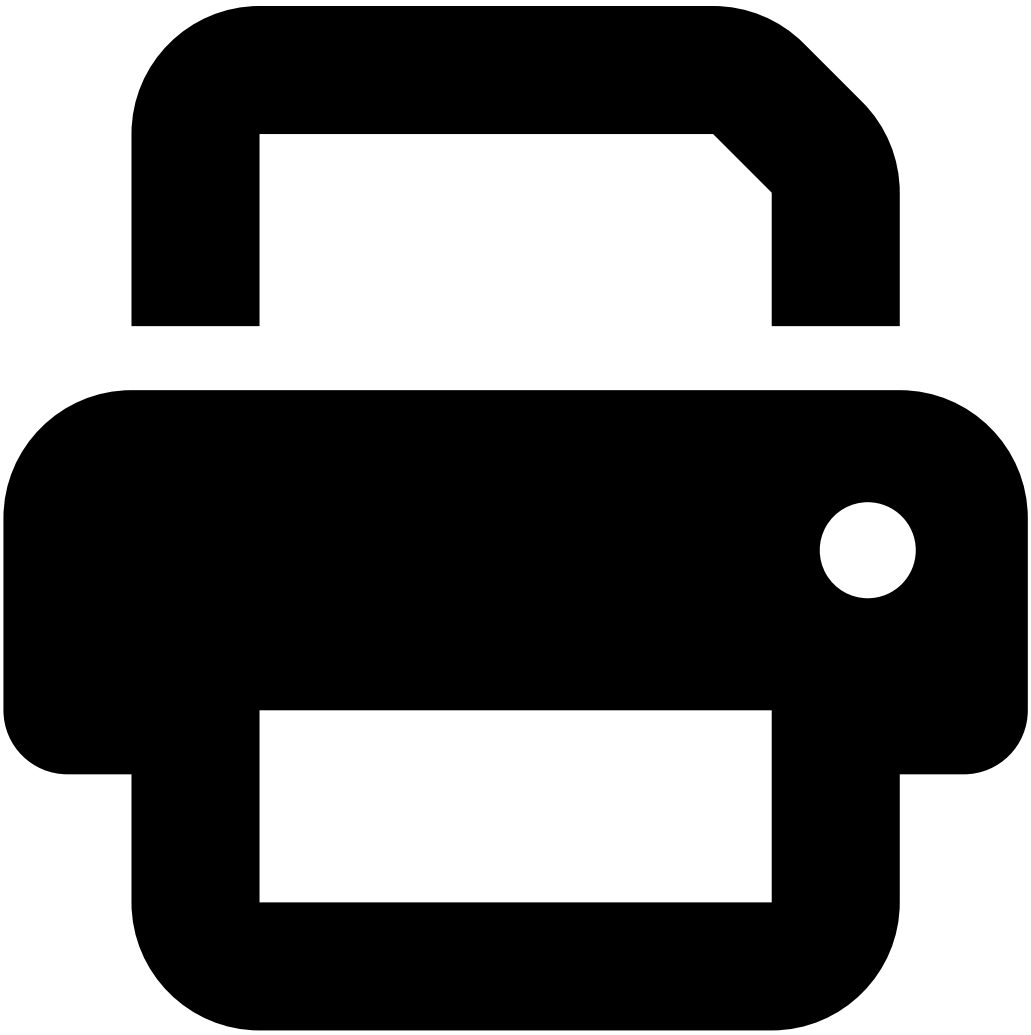

Roasted Zucchini Salad You’ll Make All year Long

When zucchini season arrives, my garden always seems to produce more than I know what to do with. Every morning I head outside with a basket, and before long it’s overflowing with beautiful zucchini. While I love making zucchini bread and fritters, sometimes the simplest recipes let fresh summer produce shine.

This Roasted Zucchini Salad is one of those recipes. Thin slices of zucchini are roasted until lightly caramelized, then layered over a simple herb vinaigrette and finished with creamy feta, crunchy pistachios, and fresh basil. It’s elegant enough for entertaining but easy enough for a weeknight

dinner.

Whether you’re harvesting zucchini from your own garden, picking some up at the farmers market, or grabbing a few from the grocery store, this fresh salad is a delicious way to celebrate the best of summer.

Things to know this Easy Roasted Zucchini Salad with Feta

- Slice the zucchini about ¼-inch thick (I use a Madeline or you can use a sharp knife) so it roasts evenly.
- Don’t overcrowd the baking sheet or the zucchini will steam instead of caramelize.
- Let the zucchini cool for a few minutes before assembling the salad so the feta stays nice and crumbly.
- Toast the pistachios for an extra layer of flavor.
- Fresh herbs make all the difference, so don’t skip them.

Variations

- Add cherry tomatoes for extra sweetness.
- Top with toasted pine nuts or walnuts instead of pistachios.
- Add grilled chicken for a complete meal.
- Finish with lemon zest for a brighter flavor.
- Replace feta with fresh burrata or shaved Parmesan.

Storage

Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. While best enjoyed fresh, the flavors become even more delicious after a few hours in the refrigerator. Let the salad come to room temperature before serving.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I make this ahead of time?

Yes. Roast the zucchini up to one day in advance. Assemble the salad just before serving for the freshest presentation.

Can I grill the zucchini instead?

Absolutely. Grilled zucchini adds a wonderful smoky flavor and works beautifully in this recipe.

What herbs work best?

Fresh parsley, oregano, and basil are my favorites, but fresh mint or dill are also delicious.

Can I serve this cold?

Yes. It’s delicious warm, at room temperature, or chilled.

What to Serve With Roasted Zucchini Salad

This salad pairs beautifully with:

- Chicken Francese
- Italian Lemon garlic Shrimp
- Bruschetta Grilled Chicken with mozzarella
- Bone -in Pork Chops piccata
- Thin no-knead focaccia rolls

Final Thoughts

If your garden is overflowing with zucchini like mine does every summer, this roasted zucchini salad is one recipe you’ll find yourself making again and again. It’s fresh, colorful,

and full of Mediterranean flavors that let simple ingredients shine. Whether you're serving it at a backyard barbecue or alongside a family dinner, it's a side dish that's sure to disappear quickly.

If you make this recipe, I'd love to hear how it turned out! Leave a comment below and don't forget to rate the recipe. Be sure to follow along for more easy, Italian-inspired recipes made with fresh, seasonal ingredients.

Easy Roasted Zucchini Salad with Feta



This Roasted Zucchini Salad is a simple Mediterranean-inspired dish made with thinly sliced zucchini roasted until tender and lightly golden, then layered over a red wine vinaigrette and finished with feta, pistachios, and fresh basil. It's fresh, flavorful, and perfect as a side dish or light vegetarian meal.

- 3 medium zucchini (about 1½ lbs.), sliced into ¼-inch slices
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil divide
- 2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil (for dressing base)
- 2 tsp. fresh or dried oregano,
- 1 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped

- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1/3 cup pistachios, chopped and lightly toasted
- 1/3 cup fresh basil leaves, torn
- salt and pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Place sliced zucchini on a baking sheet. Drizzle with 2 tbsp olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Toss to coat.
3. Roast for 10–15 minutes, flipping halfway, until tender and lightly golden
4. On a serving platter, whisk together 2 tbsp olive oil, red wine vinegar, oregano, and parsley.
5. Arrange roasted zucchini over the vinaigrette.
6. Top with feta, pistachios, and fresh basil.
7. Finish with an extra drizzle of olive oil and serve warm or at room temperature.

Salad, Side Dish
Italian
roasted zucchini feta salad, Mediterranean zucchini salad, summer zucchini recipes, and easy roasted zucchini recipe.