

# Italian Chickpea Cucumber Tomato Salad

## Italian Chickpea Cucumber Tomato Salad

This refreshing **Italian Chickpea Salad** is a celebration of simple, wholesome ingredients that come together in the most delicious way. Made with home-cooked chickpeas, juicy fresh tomatoes, crisp cucumbers, sweet bell peppers, and fragrant herbs, it's tossed in a classic Italian vinaigrette for a light and flavorful dish. It's perfect as a make-ahead lunch, a picnic salad, or a vibrant side for grilled meats or seafood. Naturally gluten-free and full of plant-based protein, this salad is both nourishing and satisfying.

Cooking your own chickpeas from scratch makes a noticeable difference in taste and texture. Simmered gently with garlic and bay leaf, the chickpeas soak up a subtle savory aroma that enhances the freshness of the vegetables. With bright parsley, a splash of red wine vinegar, and a drizzle of good olive oil, this salad is the kind of rustic Italian cooking that shines through its simplicity.

## Things to know about this Italian chickpea cucumber tomato salad

- **Canned Chickpeas Work Too:** While cooking chickpeas from scratch adds depth and texture, canned chickpeas are a great time-saver and work perfectly in this recipe. Just be sure to rinse and drain them well before using.
- **Best Served Fresh or Chilled:** This salad can be served right after assembling, but letting it sit for 20–30 minutes allows the flavors to meld. It also holds up beautifully in the fridge for up to 3 days, making it

ideal for meal prep.

- **Easy to Customize:** Add crumbled feta, shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano, or fresh mozzarella for a cheesy twist. For more protein, toss in some canned tuna, grilled chicken, or hard-boiled eggs. Chopped artichoke hearts, capers, or even avocado also make great additions.
- **Perfect for Summer Gatherings:** Light, bright, and easy to make ahead—this salad is perfect for potlucks, picnics, or any warm-weather meal.
- **Love Salads?** Don't miss my other fresh and flavorful salad recipes—perfect for any season or occasion. Watermelon cucumber feta salad or my cucumber tomato avocado salad, you're going to love them. Please leave me a comment on your experience with this recipe. I love hearing from you it's my favorite part, ENJOY!!!!

## Ingredients

### For the Chickpeas:

- 1 cup dried chickpeas
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 garlic clove, smashed
- A few sprigs of fresh rosemary or thyme (optional)
- Salt (added after cooking)

### For the Salad:

- 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 cups cooked chickpeas (from above)

- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup sliced English cucumber
- ½ cup red peppers, chopped
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil, torn

**Optional: Top with crumbled feta or shaved parmesan**

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## **For the Dressing:**

- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil (use a good Italian one)
  - 1/4 cup tablespoons red wine vinegar OR fresh lemon juice
  - 1 teaspoon dried oregano
  - salt and Freshly cracked black pepper to taste
  - 1 garlic clove, finely grated or mashed into a paste
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## **Instructions**

### **1. Cook the Chickpeas**

Soak 1 cup of dried chickpeas in water overnight (8–12 hours). Drain and rinse.

Place them in a pot and cover with water by at least 2 inches. Add:

- 1 bay leaf
- 1 garlic clove (smashed)
- Optional: a small sprig of rosemary or thyme

Bring to a boil, then reduce to a gentle simmer. Cook uncovered for **45–60 minutes**, or until tender but not mushy. **Salt the water** during the last 10 minutes of cooking. Drain and let cool slightly.

*Time-saver tip: Cook extra chickpeas and freeze them for future use.*

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## 2. Assemble the Salad

In a large bowl, combine:

- Cooked and cooled chickpeas
- Cherry tomatoes, red peppers, red onion and sliced cucumbers

Gently mix in chopped parsley and basil.

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## 3. Make the Dressing

In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar (or lemon juice), oregano, garlic, salt, and pepper.

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## 4. Toss and Serve

Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to combine. Let sit at room temperature for **20–30 minutes** to develop flavor.

Top with shaved Parmigiano or feta

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# Watermelon Cucumber Feta Salad

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## Watermelon cucumber Feta Salad with Lemon-Honey Dressing

When the weather warms up and watermelon starts showing up in every market bin, I can't help but crave this bright and refreshing salad. This **Watermelon Cucumber, feta salad with and Lemon-Honey Dressing** is one of my go-to dishes during the warmer months. It's light, vibrant, and incredibly refreshing—with just the right balance of sweet, salty, and tangy.

If you've never paired juicy watermelon with creamy feta before, you're in for a delightful surprise. The sweetness of the melon plays beautifully against the salty bite of the cheese, while crisp cucumber and paper-thin red onions add texture and a little zip. The real magic, though, is in the **simple lemon-honey vinaigrette**, which brings everything together with a bright, citrusy finish.

Whether you're hosting a backyard BBQ, heading to a picnic, or

just need a quick and beautiful side dish to serve with grilled chicken or seafood, this salad is always a hit. It comes together in minutes, looks gorgeous on the table, and tastes like summer in a bowl.

## Things to know about this Watermelon Cucumber Feta Salad

The key to making this salad truly shine is starting with a perfectly ripe, sweet watermelon. Look for one that feels heavy for its size, has a creamy yellow spot on one side (that's the field spot—where it rested on the ground and ripened in the sun), and gives a deep, hollow sound when tapped. Avoid melons with shiny skin or white streaks, which can indicate under ripeness. A good watermelon should smell slightly sweet at the stem end and feel firm all over—no soft spots or bruises.

Because the watermelon is the star of this dish, its natural sweetness balances the salty feta and tangy lemon-honey dressing beautifully. Using a bland or underripe melon can really dull the salad, so take a few extra minutes at the market to choose the best one. If you can, cut into it before assembling the salad and taste a piece—juicy and flavorful is the goal! If you love salads as much as I do, try this cucumber tomato avocado salad or my five star Caesar salad

## Ingredients

### ▪ For the Salad:

- 4 cups watermelon, cubed (seedless)
- 1 English cucumber, thinly sliced (or 2 Persian cucumbers)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  small red onion, thinly sliced

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup feta cheese, crumbled or cubed
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh mint leaves, torn
- Salt & freshly cracked black pepper, to taste

### **For the Dressing:**

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon honey
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon Dijon mustard (optional, helps emulsify)
- Pinch of salt

## **Instructions**

### **1. Make the Dressing:**

In a small bowl or jar, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, honey, Dijon mustard (if using), and a pinch of salt. Set aside.

### **2. Prep the Salad:**

In a large bowl, combine the cubed watermelon, cucumber slices, and thinly sliced red onion.

### **3. Dress and Toss:**

Drizzle the dressing over the salad and gently toss to combine. Taste and adjust salt if needed.

### **4. Add the Feta & Mint:**

Gently fold in the crumbled feta and fresh mint just before serving to keep the texture light and fresh.

### **5. Serve Immediately:**

Best served chilled, immediately after mixing. (If making ahead, keep the watermelon mixture and dressing separate until ready to serve.)

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### **Tips:**

- Soak the red onion slices in cold water for 10 minutes to mellow their sharpness.
  - Add a handful of arugula or baby spinach for a peppery twist.
  - For extra zing, finish with a sprinkle of chili flakes or a drizzle of balsamic glaze
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## **Pan-Fried Eggplant Cutlets (Milanese Style)**

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If you don't like eggplant, this pan-fried eggplant cutlet recipe may just change your mind . Growing up, eggplant Milanese style was one of those meals that made a regular weeknight feel special—crispy, golden slices of eggplant, lightly fried and served with just a squeeze of lemon or a pile of peppery arugula. It's a typical kind of Italian recipe, that proves you don't need a long list of ingredients

to make something really satisfying. Whether you serve it as a main course with a fresh salad or as a starter with warm marinara, this classic Italian dish is always a crowd-pleaser.

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

- **Sweating the Eggplant Matters:** Salting the eggplant slices before cooking draws out excess moisture and bitterness, which helps them fry up beautifully crisp—not soggy.
- **Breadcrumb Choice Makes a Difference:** Traditional Italian-style breadcrumbs give that classic flavor, but using panko will make the crust extra light and crunchy. You can also mix the two for the best of both worlds.
- **Don't Skip the Cheese:** Mixing grated Parmigiano-Reggiano into the breadcrumbs adds deep savory flavor and helps the coating brown nicely.
- **Shallow Frying Is Key:** You don't need a deep fryer—just a thin layer of olive oil in a skillet does the trick. Fry in batches and don't overcrowd the pan to keep everything crisp.
- **Make It a Meal or a Starter:** Serve it with a lemony arugula salad for a light main, layer it on ciabatta with mozzarella for an incredible sandwich, or top it with marinara and melted cheese for a quick eggplant parmesan twist.
- **lastly if you like eggplant as much as I do try my other eggplant recipes.** Italian baked stuffed eggplant or vegetarian stuffed eggplant rollatini. And eggplant is delicious with pasta try this Sicilian eggplant caponata

rigatoni

## Ingredients

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

## Instructions

### 1. Prepare the eggplant:

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

### 2. Set up breading stations:

- In a shallow dish add the eggs and whisk slightly .

- In a second bowl, mix breadcrumbs, Parmigiano, garlic powder, oregano, and parsley

### 3. Bread the eggplant:

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

### 4. Fry:

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

### 5. Serve:

- Plate with lemony arugula salad and extra shaved Parmigiano, or spoon warm marinara on the side or over top. and a drizzle of good olive oil .  
ENJOY!!!!

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# **Italian chicken and potato patties**

# **Italian chicken and potato**

# patties

If you're like me and always looking for family-pleasing meals that are easy to make and delicious, these Italian chicken and potato patties, known as popette di pollo e patate, are just the thing. Made with shredded poached chicken breast, creamy mashed potatoes, sweet bell peppers, and plenty of grated parmesan cheese, then they're pan fried until golden and crispy. Perfect for a quick weeknight dinner, light lunch, or even as a party appetizer-just be sure to make them smaller if serving them as party food.

These take me right back to my childhood kitchen, where if there was leftover mashed potatoes or chicken my mother would whip up a batch of polette di pollo on a whim- no measurements, or special ingredients just whatever we had on hand. I've added my own twist over the years, but the main ingredients of chicken and potatoes remains the same.

## Things to know about this Italian chicken and potato patties recipe

1. Make-ahead friendly: You can shape the patties ahead of time and store them in the fridge for up to two days- just fry them fresh when you're ready to serve.
2. Great for leftovers: I cooked the chicken and potatoes fresh for this recipe, but you can absolutely use leftover chicken – whether it's broiled, grilled or even rotisserie. It's a delicious way to repurpose what you already have in your fridge
3. Versatile size: Make them large for a hearty dinner or shape them smaller for appetizers and party bites- just adjust the cooking time accordingly.
4. These crispy Italian chicken and potato patties are perfect whether you're serving them for dinner, packing them for lunch, or setting them out as bite size

appetizer, they're always a hit. If you try this recipe, let me know how it turns out!! Leave me comment, snap a photo. rate it, and please don't forget to tag me on social medium with your creations. I love hearing from you !!!

## Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked and shredded skinless , boneless chicken breast
- 2 cups mashed potatoes
- 1 cup finely diced bell peppers any color or a mix
- 2 Tbsp. minced onion
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1 egg
- salt and pepper to taste
- **FOR THE COATING**
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan
- 1 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
- 1 egg lightly beaten
- 2 cups olive oil canola blend for shallow frying

## Instructions

1. Start by poaching the chicken breast until just cooked through. Let cool . then use two forks to shred the chicken. Set aside
2. Cook the potatoes until soft, mash and season with salt and pepper. For two cups of mashed potatoes I used three medium russet potatoes.
3. In a bowl combine the mashed potatoes, shredded chicken, onion, bell peppers, parmesan cheese and egg. Salt and pepper to taste.
4. In a separate bowl combine the bread crumbs, parmesan, and Italian parsley. In another add the egg and slightly

beat using a fork.

5. Form the chicken patties by scooping about 2 tablespoons of the mixture and form into round slightly flatten patties
  6. Dip each patty first in the egg and then in the bread crumb mixture. Repeat for all the patties
  7. In a large skillet Heat the frying oil over medium heat. Fry the patties in batches for 3-4 minutes per side, or until golden brown and crisp. drain on paper towels.
  8. Serve with my easy marinara sauce and my delicious cucumber, tomato, avocado salad for a complete summer time meal everyone will love. ENJOY!!!
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## **Easy homemade spinach crepes**

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

# Things to know about this Easy homemade spinach crepes recipe

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

If you want to make crepes into a lunch or dinner, what I do is make a rich ricotta and spinach filling and use these spinach crepes instead of store-bought pasta tubes to make manicotti. I layer them in a baking dish with my easy marinara sauce and bake until bubbly and golden. It's a lighter, healthier version on the classic- delicious and perfect to make ahead of time , and bake when you're ready to serve.

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

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

# Ingredients

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

# Instructions

1. Prepare the spinach by placing it a dry saute pan and cook until wilted ( 2-3 minutes) let cool, squeeze out as much liquid as possible.
2. In a blender or food processor combine the spinach, eggs, milk and salt , blend until smooth.
3. Add the flour and pulse until combined. Don't over mix. The consistency should be smooth and thin , similar to heavy cream. It should coat the back of a spoon. Then set the batter in the fridge to rest for at least 1 hour or overnight.
4. Heat an 8 inch non-stick skillet over medium high heat. Grease with a small amount of batter. Pour a small amount of batter( about 2 Tbsp.) into the pan and swirl to coat evenly. Cook each crepe 1-2 minutes per side. Greasing the pan with butter lightly before each crepe.
5. To store spinach crepes, allow them to cool completely before stacking and covering them tightly with plastic wrap or placing them in an airtight container. Keep them in the fridge for 2-3 days. For freezing separate each cooled crepe with parchment paper, stack and wrap tightly with plastic wrap or place in a freezer safe container. They will last in the freezer up to three months.
6. To reheat the frozen spinach crepes, thaw the crepes in the fridge, then warm them up in a skillet or

microwave until heated through.

7. Second,

8. And so on

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## **Air fryer Parmesan Chicken Spiedini**

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Air fryer parmesan chicken spiedini are Italy's version of skewers or kabobs. In this spiedini recipe boneless, skinless chicken thighs are marinated in a blend of Italian spices, cooked in the air fryer, and basted with a delicious garlic, parmesan butter sauce.

The chicken is so tender and juicy, , and the spiedini can be served as an appetizer or as a main course. You can also cook the chicken skewers in the oven or on a grill, making them perfect all year. No matter how you cook them, they're full of flavor and always a crowd pleaser

If you like easy and delicious chicken recipes, try this oven baked chicken spiedini recipe , that you will love, or one of my personal favorites Easy Italian chicken croquettes

## **Helpful things to know about this**

# air fryer parmesan chicken spiedini recipe

When using wooden skewers, make sure to soak them in water for at least 30 minutes before making the recipe. This keeps the wood from burning in the air fryer. Typically, I prefer metal skewers.

If you're not in the mood for chicken thighs or prefer chicken breast this recipe works for both. And if you're not in the mood for chicken at all, this recipe would also be delicious with beef, pork, or shrimp. The cooking times will be different, so you'll need to experiment to get the exact cooking time.

No air fryer ? No problem . These chicken spiedini can be oven-baked or grilled. Either way , you'll still get that delicious juicy inside and lightly crisp outside, perfect for any time of the year.

One of the best things about this recipe is that you can make it ahead of time. Simply assemble the the chicken skewers, cover and refrigerate them up to 1 day or when you're ready to cook. In fact letting them marinate a bit longer enhances the flavor. When you're ready, just pop them in the air fryer, grill or oven. ENJOY!!! If you make this air fryer parmesan spiedini leave me a comment below, I love hearing from you and it helps others. THANKS!!!

## Ingredients For the chicken

- 1 1/2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon each garlic, onion, and paprika powder
- 1 Tbsp. Italian seasoning
- Juice and zest from one lemon
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan

- Salt and pepper to taste
- **GARLIC PARMESAN SAUCE**
- 1 stick softened butter
- 2Tbsp. minced garlic
- 2 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese

## Instructions

1. Add the chicken pieces to a bowl with the oil, parmesan, lemon juice , zest, Italian seasonings, garlic, onion, and paprika powder. Salt and pepper to taste. Mix to coat evenly. Allow the chicken to marinate in the fridge covered for as little as 30 minutes but ideally overnight.
2. In a separate bowl combine the butter, minced garlic, parsley, parmesan, lemon juice, and chili flakes. Mix to create a compound butter.
3. Preheat the air fryer or out door grill I usually air fry the skewers at 400 degrees
4. Thread chicken pieces onto metal or wooden skewers and set aside. Remember, if using wooden skewers soak in water before using.
5. Add the skewers to the air fryer a few at a time, so as not to overcrowd the pan and the chicken cooks evenly. Cook 5-6 minutes, flip and cook an additional 3-4 minutes.
6. The internal temperature of the chicken should be at 150 degrees, at this point baste the chicken skewers with the garlic butter, and cook 1 minute , flip baste the other side and cook 1 more minute.
7. Top with more parmesan and parsley, serve warm with the parmesan sauce. ENJOY!!!!

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# **Easy Italian chicken croquettes**

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These easy Italian chicken croquettes are ideal as a starter or appetizer because they not only taste delicious but also look irresistible. Crispy and crunchy on the outside and moist on the inside, they're a hit with both kids and adults.

While croquettes originated in France, they've become a loved dish all over Italy and around the world, with savory variations that reflect local flavors and traditions. In this version, inspired by Southern Italy, the raw chicken is processed either in a food processor or chopped fine by hand and mixed with simple, flavorful ingredients- no potatoes.

Perfect for parties, family dinners, or anytime snack, these crocchette di pollo should come with a warning label- HIGHLY ADDITIVE!!!!

## **Things to know about this easy Italian chicken croquette recipe**

You're going to love this recipe. Not only are these chicken croquettes easy to make and delicious, they can be made ahead of time, making them perfect for entertaining or weeknight meals. In fact, they're actually better if they're refrigerated before frying- chilling helps them firm up, hold

their shape, and crisp up beautifully.

You can shape them in advance and refrigerate up to 2 days or freeze until you're ready to fry. They're kid-friendly, crowd pleasing, and freezer friendly- what more could you want. Pair them with my creamy lemon parmesan zucchini orzo or my Italian-style sauteed swiss chard for a complete Italian dinner.

## Ingredients

- 1 Lb. cubed skinless, boneless chicken breast
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup Italian parsley
- 1 garlic clove
- salt and pepper to taste
- pinch of nutmeg ( optional)
- **FOR THE BREAD COATING**
- 1 egg slightly beaten
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/3 cup grated parmesan +
- 1/3 cup chopped Italian parsley
- 1 teaspoon garlic, onion, and paprika powder
- whisk everything together to blend well
- 2 cups canola olive oil blend for shallow frying

## Instructions

1. In a food processor add the chicken breast, breadcrumbs, parmesan, egg , parsley, garlic, nutmeg ( if using), salt and pepper to taste.
2. Pulse until well combined, but still coarse. The texture should be thick and sticky , like a meatball. If it's too wet add one or two more tablespoons of breadcrumbs.

3. Lightly oil your hands, and form about 2 Tbsp. of the chicken mixture into small ovals, or fat finger shapes, about 2 inches long.
  4. Dip each croquette first in the slightly beaten egg and then in the Italian seasoned breadcrumbs. Set aside.
  5. Heat a shallow layer of oil in a heavy skillet over medium heat . Fry the chicken croquettes in batches, turning to brown evenly on all sides (about 6-7 minutes total), or until golden and cooked through. ENJOY!!!
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## **Italian spinach pie Torta Pasqualina**

## **Italian spinach pie Torta Pasqualina**

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

Over time , as the dish made it's way into Italian- American kitchens, the recipe evolved. spinach became a popular substitute- it's easier to find, milder in flavor, and cooks down perfectly into the creamy filling. Today , both greens are widely used, and many home cooks use what's seasonal or

convenient. You can mix swiss chard and spinach for the best of both greens. Despite the changes the basis of torta Pasqualina remains the same, a flaky pie filled with greens, ricotta and those signature whole eggs inside, symbolizing life and a celebration of renewal.

## **Make Italian spinach pie Torta Pasqualina easy**

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

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

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

If you like traditional Italian Holiday recipes try my

rosemary garlic seared lambchops or Italian Easter rice pie  
or Italian boneless leg of lamb roast

## Ingredients

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

## Instructions

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

- small slits on the top. brush with egg wash .
6. , Bake in a 375 degree preheated oven for 45-55 minutes, or until golden brown and the filling is set
  7. Let cool slightly before slicing. ENJOY!!!
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## **Parmesan asparagus with Blistered tomatoes**

## **Parmesan asparagus with blistered tomatoes**

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

# Things to know about this Parmesan asparagus with blistered tomatoes recipe

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Ingredients

- 1 bunch fresh asparagus trimmed
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1/3 cup white wine
- 1/2 cup vegetable stock
- 1 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
- fresh basil leaves
- salt and pepper to taste

# Instructions

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

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# How to make homemade crepes

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Don't be intimidated by making homemade crepes they are so very easy to make. Though it may seem complicated making restaurant-quality crepes at home isn't very difficult. With just a few simple ingredients and minimal prep these from the diner crepes can be ready to enjoy. These homemade crepes are thin and delicate with the most buttery crisp edges. Easy to make with no special equipment needed just a blender and a regular 9 inch skillet, and they're ready for your choice of sweet or savory filling and toppings.

This crepes were on our menu at the two dinners we had, and I have eaten my fair share learning a lot along the way. My recipe hasn't changed, but my method has. At the restaurants we mixed the batter in a large bowl because of the amount of batter we went through, but at home you can put all the ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth. How easy is that?

## Things to know about how to make homemade crepes

Don't you worry if your first crepe fails, in the restaurant we used to say that the first crepe fail goes to the cook. The reason ? A pan not hot enough to receive the batter. To prevent this from happening heat the pan before and after adding the butter for almost a minute before adding the batter for a perfect , beautiful first crepe. Or maybe you mess it up on purpose so you can eat the first crepe.

Other reason for failed crepes is the consistency of the batter is crucial- it should be silky smooth, and pourable, like heavy cream. If it's too thick, the crepes will be dense and hard to spread in the pan, too thin , and they'll tear or cook unevenly. To achieve the perfect consistency, blend your

ingredients thoroughly, to avoid lumps, then let the batter rest for at least one hour to allow the flour to fully absorb the liquid and the gluten to relax. If the batter seems to thick after resting add a tablespoon or two of milk or water , until it flows easily but still lightly coats the spoon.

Mastering the consistency of crepe batter may take a little practice, but once you get it right, you'll be flipping perfect crepes every time. Whether you're filling them with sweet jam or savory cheese, it all starts with a smooth, silky batter. Be patient, let the batter rest and adjust as needed – it's a few simple steps that make a big difference. Ready to give it a try? Grab your ingredients, mix up a batch and let your first crepe set the tone . Don't forget to share your creations- tag me on Instagram so I can see your crepe creations . I love hearing from you it's my favorite part, and it helps others. ENJOY!!!

## Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- (1/3 cup sugar for sweet crepes)
- 1 1/3 cup milk
- 3 Tbsp. melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- scant 1 cup of flour
- pinch of salt

## Instructions

1. Add the eggs, (sugar if making sweet crepes omit for savory crepes), melted butter, flour and vanilla to a blender, blend until smooth (about 2-3 minutes) transfer to a bowl, cover and refrigerate for it least 1 hour or up to 2 days.
2. Preheat a 9 inch non-stick skillet over medium high heat, add 1 teaspoon butter, briefly whisk batter then

pour 1/4 cup of the batter in the center of the pan, tilting the pan in a circular motion to help the batter to cover the bottom of the pan in an even circle. Cook until top is set and bottom golden brown about 1 minute flip and cook on the other side until cooked about 1 minute more.

3. Using a spatula fold the crepes in quarters. Transfer to a plate. Repeat the process with the remaining batter for a total of 8 crepes.
4. Serve with fresh berries and confection sugar. ENJOY!!!