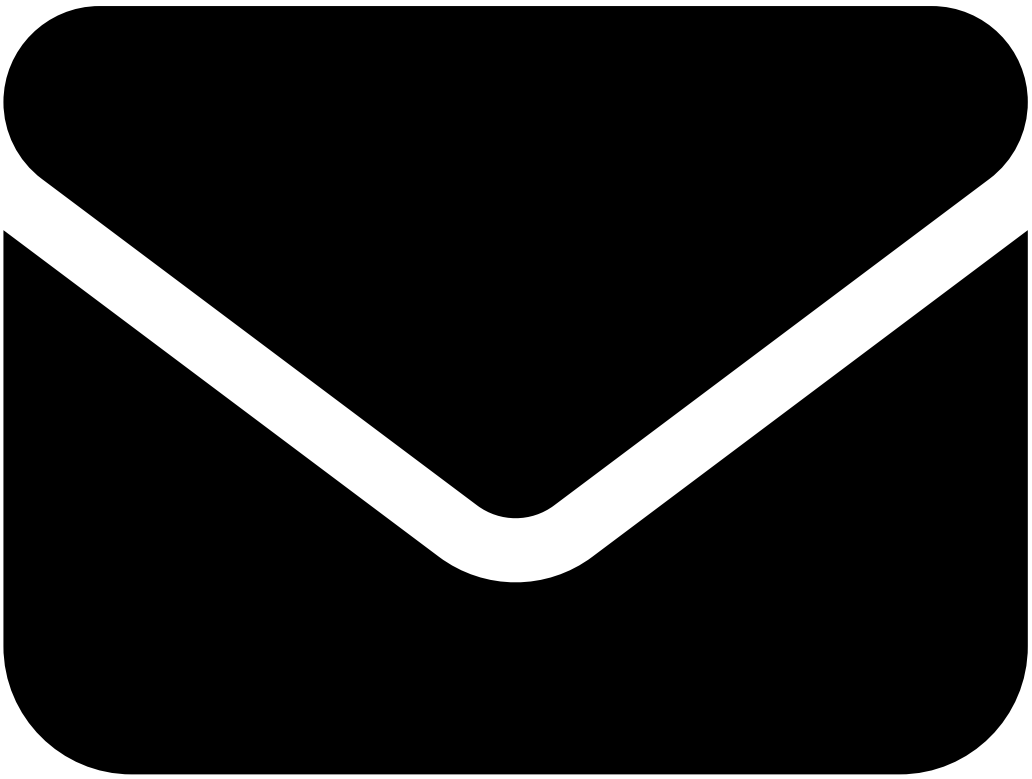
Italian Frittelle – Fried Dough with Sugar

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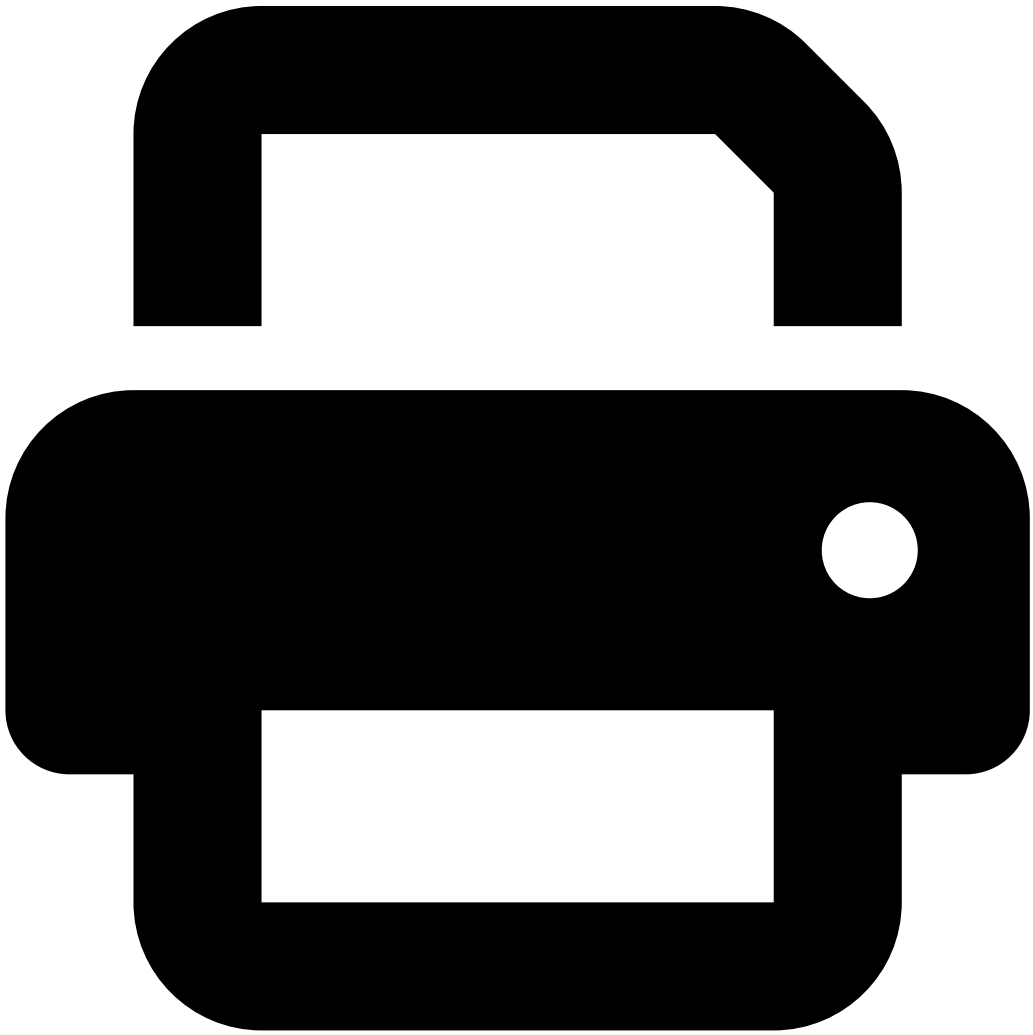
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Growing up in Italy, Christmas Eve came with its own special traditions. My mother would make homemade pizza dough, but some of that dough was always destined for something else. She would pull off little pieces, stretch them by hand, and fry them until golden. Then came the sugar. Crispy on the outside, soft inside, and absolutely irresistible. It was one of those simple treats that made Christmas Eve special. Some of my fondest food memories come from watching my mother turn everyday ingredients into something everyone looked forward to.

Good to Know

Use a well-risen dough: Allow the dough to double in size before frying. This is what gives the frittelle their light, airy interior.

Don’t overwork the dough: Once risen, handle it gently. Pull

off small portions and stretch them by hand. The rustic, uneven shapes are part of their charm.

Watch the oil temperature: Aim for 350°F. If the oil is too hot, the outside will brown before the inside cooks. If it’s too cool, the dough will absorb too much oil.

Fry in small batches: Give each piece enough room to puff up and cook evenly. Avoid overcrowding the pan.

When to add the sugar: Drain the frittelle briefly and toss them in granulated sugar while still warm. This helps the sugar cling to the surface.

Can you make the dough ahead? Yes. You can refrigerate the dough after its first rise, covered, and bring it closer to room temperature before shaping and frying.

How to store leftovers: These are best eaten fresh, while the outside is crisp and the inside is soft. If you have leftovers, store them in an airtight container at room temperature for up to one day. Reheat briefly in the oven or air fryer.

My Italian kitchen tip: Don’t wait for a special occasion to make these. My mother made them every Christmas Eve, but they’re delicious anytime you want a simple taste of Italian home cooking. ❤

More Italian Recipes to Try

If you love simple, homemade Italian food, here are a few more recipes from my kitchen to enjoy:

- **Homemade Pizza Dough:** The same versatile dough used to make these traditional frittelle.
- **Easy Marinara Sauce:** A staple in my Italian kitchen, perfect for dipping savory fried dough.

- **Homemade Italian focaccia Bread:** Another classic made with simple ingredients.
- **Italian Cookies:** More traditional sweets to add to your holiday table.

Kitchen Tools I Recommend

A few kitchen essentials make preparing homemade frittelle easier:

- **KitchenAid Stand Mixer:** Great for mixing and kneading yeast dough.
- **Digital Kitchen Thermometer:** Helps maintain the ideal frying temperature of 350°F.
- **Spider Strainer:** Makes it easy to lift the frittelle out of hot oil.
- **Rimmed Baking Sheet:** Useful for draining the fried dough.

Italian Frittelle – Fried Dough with Sugar



These Italian fried dough frittelle are made with simple homemade yeast dough, pulled into rustic pieces, fried until golden and crispy, and tossed in granulated sugar. Soft and airy inside, they're a beloved Christmas Eve treat inspired by my mother's Italian family tradition.

- 4 cups all-purpose flour or bread flour
- 1 1/2 cups warm water
- 2 1/4 tsp. active dry yeast (1 packet)
- 1 tsp granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 cups vegetable or light olive oil for frying

1. **Activate the yeast:** Add warm water (about 105–110°F), yeast, and sugar to a small bowl. Let stand for 5–10 minutes until foamy.
2. **Make the dough:** Add flour to a large mixing bowl. Pour in the yeast mixture and olive oil. Mix until a shaggy dough forms.
3. **Add salt:** Add the salt and knead for approximately 8–10 minutes, until the dough is smooth and elastic.
4. **First rise:** Transfer to a lightly oiled bowl. Cover and let rise in a warm place for approximately 1½–2 hours, or until doubled in size.
5. **Shape:** Gently deflate the dough. Pull off small pieces and stretch them into irregular rounds or oblong shapes.
6. **Fry:** Heat neutral vegetable oil to 350°F. Fry in batches, turning until golden brown on both sides and cooked through.
7. **Sugar coating:** Drain briefly and immediately toss in granulated sugar while still warm.

Chef’s Tip: Keep the oil temperature around 350°F for perfectly golden frittelle. Fry in small batches so they have room to puff up, and toss them in granulated sugar while still warm so the sugar sticks. Serve immediately for the best crispy outside and soft, airy center.

Appetizer, Snack

Italian

Fried Dough, Italian frittelle