

Italian Eggplant Parmesan

Italian Baked Eggplant

This is a classic Italian baked eggplant parmesan, bursting with robust Italian flavors. It's a lightened up version with air fried breadcrumb crusted eggplant and layered with marinara, cheeses and herbs.

It starts with unpeeled eggplant, sliced into 1/2 inch rounds, dipped in egg, coated with Italian flavored breadcrumbs, layered with marinara and oozing cheeses. Am telling you this is the best eggplant recipe ever.

My family who doesn't have the same fondness for eggplant as I do, loves IT, that makes it a WIN-WIN because it's one of my very favorites.

Italian Eggplant Parmesan Tips

Start by choosing shiny, firm small eggplant. When choosing eggplant small is better, larger ones tend to have more seeds and less flavor.

Then there's the debate about breading the eggplant or not, I have made it both ways, if you want a lighter version omit the breadcrumb crust and follow the rest of the recipe.

In this recipe I didn't peel the eggplant, if using larger eggplant I recommend peeling them, the skin on larger eggplants tends to be tough and more bitter than smaller ones.

I used the air fryer option on my toaster oven to fry the eggplant, using no oil, the finished Italian eggplant parmesan was so delicious with no oil taste.

If you don't have an air fryer you can fry the eggplant slices in 4 Tablespoons for 2 minutes on each side in hot vegetable oil, drain on paper towels before layer.

Homemade marinara is a staple in my kitchen, I use it in so many recipes, when I make it I always made more and freeze it. That's what I used in this recipe,

you can use your favorite one. It's also good to let the baked eggplant cool a bit before serving for easier slicing.

If you make this recipe please leave me a comment and don't forget to tag me on Instagram, that's my favorite part.

Ingredients

- 2 medium eggplants
- 2 eggs slightly beaten + 1 for the ricotta
- 2 cups Italian seasoned bread crumbs
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella
- 2 cups grated parmesan
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- 1 cup chopped spinach
- 4 cups prepared marinara
- 2 Tablespoons chopped Italian parsley
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Cut unpeeled eggplant into 1/2 inch slices
2. Salt eggplant slices
3. Put salted eggplant slices in a colander placed over a bowl
4. Place paper towels over eggplant and place a few heavy cans on top of it leave for a few hours over overnight
5. If air fryer turn temperature to 375
6. Mix ricotta with the spinach, one egg and 1/2 cup of the

parmesan salt and pepper to taste

7. Mix 1/2 cup of the parmesan and 1 tablespoon Italian parsley to the bread crumbs
8. Dip eggplant in egg mixture, then in bread crumb mixture
9. Air fry or conventionally fry eggplant until golden 10 minutes in air fryer
10. Begin layering eggplant casserole beginning with marinara sauce then eggplant then ricotta, mozzarella and parmesan , repeating ending with mozzarella
11. Bake in a 375 degree oven for 45 minutes or until brown and bubbly
12. Cool slightly before serving