

EGGPLANT PARMESAN

This Eggplant Parmesan is simple, cozy, and delicious. It's the ultimate comfort food. It's indulgent and satisfying without too much work. I crave this dish all year round, it's one of my favorite fall and winter dishes.

Ingredients.

2 large eggplants, cut into 1/4" thick discs
8oz mozzarella cheese, shredded
1 ball fresh mozzarella
1/4 cup parmesan, freshly grated or shaved
1/2 cup pesto
all purpose flour
extra virgin olive oil (this recipe uses a lot of olive oil)
kosher salt
freshly ground black pepper
1 jar marinara

Directions.

Cover a work area with a single layer of paper towels or a clean kitchen towel. Lay the eggplant slices out on the towels in a single layer, sprinkle with a small pinch of kosher salt, flip, and sprinkle a little more salt on the second side. Top with another layer of towels, place a cookie sheet on top of that, and a heavy book on top of the cookie sheet. Let the slices sit under the weight for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, prepare your pan-frying area. You'll need a casserole dish with a cup or so of flour, mixed with a little freshly ground black pepper. You'll also need a pair of tongs, a frying pan or skillet, olive oil, and a cooling rack lined with paper towels.

After 20 minutes, pile the eggplant into a dish and discard the towels. Heat a thin layer of olive oil in a frying pan or skillet over medium high heat, until shimmering. One at a time, dredge the eggplant slices with a little flour (it will stick to both sides but not the skin), shake to get rid of the excess flour. Working in small batches, fry a few of the eggplant slices until golden, flip and cook until the second side is golden. Add more oil to the pan as needed, you don't want to cook them in a dry pan, even if that means adding it between flipping the eggplant slices. Once both sides are golden, carefully transfer the eggplant to the lined cooling rack, allowing them to cook and letting some of the oil drain out. Repeat with all the eggplant slices.

Preheat the oven to 350° F. In a large skillet or casserole dish, spread a thin layer of marinara sauce, followed by a layer of eggplant slices, a little pesto, a little marinara, a little sprinkle of the grated mozzarella. Repeat, beginning with the eggplant until you get to the last layer of eggplant. Top the dish with a little pesto, marinara, torn pieces of fresh mozzarella and the Parmesan cheese. Transfer to the oven and cook for 30-45minutes. Until the dish is heated through and the cheese on top is golden and bubbly. Remove it from the oven and let it rest for ten minutes or so before digging in.

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