

# Eggplant Parmesan (Parmigiana)

Classic Italian Eggplant Parmesan (Parmigiana) with crispy breaded eggplant layers, rich marinara sauce, and melted cheese. A hearty vegetarian comfort dish.

2h

PREP

45 min

COOK

2h 45min

TOTAL

8

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

## Ingredients

- 2 eggplant
- 5 cup breadcrumb
- 1 tbsp oregano
- 6 egg
- 2 tbsp milk
- 7 cup marinara sauce
- 2 cup parmesan cheese
- 1 lb mozzarella cheese
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 clove garlic
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp rock salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 cup basil

## Instructions

### 1 Prepare the eggplant

Peel both eggplants and cut them into ½-inch thick round slices. Arrange the slices on baking sheets and sprinkle generously with 1 tablespoon salt on both sides. Let stand for 1 hour to draw out bitter juices and excess moisture.

- 2 Rinse the salted eggplant slices thoroughly under cold running water. Pat completely dry with paper towels, pressing firmly to remove as much moisture as possible.
- 3 **Set up breading station**

Set up three shallow dishes: place 5 cups all-purpose flour in the first dish. Beat 6 eggs with 2 tablespoons milk in the second dish. Mix 7 cups breadcrumbs with 1 cup grated Parmesan, 1 teaspoon oregano, 1 teaspoon thyme, and 2 minced garlic cloves in the third dish.
- 4 **Bread the eggplant**

Working with one slice at a time, dredge each eggplant slice in flour and shake off excess. Dip in egg mixture, then coat thoroughly with the seasoned breadcrumb mixture, pressing gently to adhere. Place breaded slices on a clean baking sheet.
- 5 **Fry the eggplant**

Heat oil to ½-inch depth in a large skillet over medium heat until it reaches 375°F (190°C). Fry eggplant slices in batches for 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown and crispy.
- 6 Transfer fried eggplant to paper towel-lined baking sheets and season lightly with salt while still hot. Continue with remaining slices, maintaining oil temperature between batches.
- 7 **Prepare for assembly**

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Lightly grease a 13x9-inch baking dish with olive oil. Spread ⅓ of the marinara sauce on the bottom of the dish.
- 8 **Assemble the layers**

Layer half of the fried eggplant slices over the sauce, overlapping slightly if necessary. Top with half of the remaining marinara sauce and half of the 2 cups mozzarella cheese.
- 9 Add the remaining eggplant slices, then the remaining marinara sauce and mozzarella cheese. Sprinkle the remaining Parmesan cheese evenly on top.
- 10 **Bake**

Cover with foil and bake for 25 minutes. Remove foil and continue baking for 15-20 minutes until cheese is golden brown and bubbly.
- 11 Let rest for 10-15 minutes before serving to allow layers to set. Cut into squares and serve hot.

## Tips

Salt the eggplant slices generously and let them drain for at least 1 hour - this removes bitterness and prevents the dish from becoming watery. Press the slices between paper towels to remove as much moisture as possible before breading.

Maintain oil temperature at 375°F for perfect frying. If the oil is too cool, the eggplant will absorb too much oil; if too hot, the outside will burn before the inside cooks through. Use a thermometer for accuracy.

Make your breadcrumb mixture extra flavorful by adding dried herbs, garlic powder, and freshly grated Parmesan cheese. Press the breadcrumbs firmly onto each slice to ensure good adhesion.

Use a combination of cheeses for the best flavor - aged Parmesan for sharpness and whole milk mozzarella for creaminess. Freshly grated cheese melts better than pre-shredded varieties.

Don't overcrowd your baking dish. The layers should be snug but not compressed, allowing the sauce to distribute evenly and the cheese to melt properly throughout.

Let the finished dish rest for 10-15 minutes before serving. This allows the layers to set and makes it much easier to cut clean portions without everything sliding apart.

For a lighter version, brush the breaded eggplant slices with olive oil and bake at 425°F for 15-20 minutes per side instead of frying, turning once until golden brown.

Taste your marinara sauce before assembling and adjust seasoning as needed. The sauce should be well-seasoned since it's a major flavor component of the final dish.