

Zucchini Fries

By Chula King

Zucchini Fries are an amazing alternative to potato fries when you want the crispiness and crunch but without the calories and carbs. These Crispy Parmesan Zucchini Fries are dusted in flour, dipped in an egg and milk mixture, and coated in a combination of Panko breadcrumbs and freshly grated Parmesan cheese. Then, they are baked to crispy perfection!

Zucchini is a very nutritious vegetable that provides several important health benefits. One of those health benefits is its high percentage of water – 94% in fact!

When it comes to crispness, however, zucchini's water rich content is a problem. Therefore, if you want crispy zucchini fries, the secret is to remove as much of the water as possible before cooking.

I do this in two ways. First, after I've cut the zucchini into sticks, I cut away the watery seeds. Second, I sprinkle the zucchini sticks with some salt and let them sit for about 30 minutes. The salt draws out the water. After 30 minutes, I blot the zucchini dry with paper towels. The result is perfectly crisp zucchini fries every time.

Crispy Parmesan Zucchini Fries

4 servings

Ingredients

2 to 3 medium zucchini (about 1.25 pounds)
1 tablespoon of Kosher salt, divided
½ cup of all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon of black pepper
1 large egg
1/3 cup milk
1 cup Panko breadcrumbs
½ cup (2 ounces) freshly grated Parmesan cheese
½ teaspoon Italian seasoning
Olive oil for coating the rack and zucchini sticks



Directions

Rinse zucchini well and dry. Remove both ends and cut into half-inch by 3.5 to 4-inch long sticks. Cut seeds from each of the sticks.

Arrange zucchini sticks in a single layer, skin side down on paper towel lined baking sheet. Sprinkle with 1.5 teaspoons of kosher salt. Let sit for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, blot zucchini sticks dry with paper towels.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil, insert a cooling rack into the baking sheet. Brush rack with olive oil. Set aside.

Combine flour, remaining 1.5 teaspoons of Kosher salt and pepper into a Ziplock bag. Set aside.

Whisk together egg and milk in a shallow bowl. Set aside

Combine panko breadcrumbs and grated Parmesan cheese in a shallow dish. Set aside.

Working in batches, add zucchini sticks to flour mixture, shake to coat. Dip coated zucchini sticks in egg/milk mixture and coat with Panko/Parmesan cheese mixture. Place in a single layer on prepared cooling rack.

Brush coated zucchini sticks with olive oil. Bake in preheated 425 degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes.

Serve with spicy dipping sauce.

Chula's Tips

- The best way to ensure that the zucchini fries are crisp is to remove as much moisture as possible from them. One way to do this is to cut the seeds away. The reason is that the seeds contain a lot of the moisture. In addition to this, salting the zucchini after its cut draws out moisture.
- I like to bake the zucchini fries on a wire cooling rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. This allows the air to circulate around the zucchini fries which enhances their crispiness. It's important, however, to coat the rack with olive oil and non-stick vegetable spray to minimize sticking.
- For the **spicy dipping sauce**, I combined half cup of mayonnaise, 2 tablespoons of chili sauce, ¼ teaspoon of paprika, ¼ teaspoon of salt, 1/8 teaspoon of oregano, 1/8 teaspoon of black pepper, and 1/8 teaspoon of cayenne pepper.