

Eggplant Parmesan with Sausage

A Keto friendly recipe

My wife, Rhonda, and I have been on a Keto diet for a couple of months now. The things we miss most are pizza and pasta. As many of you know, we owned an Italian restaurant, Frankie's Pizza and Pasta, born out of our love for those amazing foods. So now I am on a mission to satiate my Italian cravings while on Keto. This recipe was another success on that journey. The Keto diet calls for lots of fat. Thus, the addition of the sausage and I didn't skimp on the cheese!

4 servings

For Eggplant:

1 large globe eggplant--sliced
approximately 3/8 inch thick

1 teaspoon salt

1/ cup olive oil

For Sauce:

1/2 medium onion

3-5 cloves garlic-minced

1/2 pound Italian sausage

1/4 cup white wine

28 oz. can of whole peeled tomatoes

1 tbs. tomato paste

fresh or dried herbs (see Frankie's Tips)

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

salt and pepper to taste

To Finish:

1-1/2 cup shredded mozzarella (or fresh
mozzarella—diced small)

3/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-
Reggiano (lightly packed)



1. Read **Frankie's Tips** regarding sweating eggplant (optional), and methods of cooking. If roasting eggplant in the oven, preheat to 425 F. Brush baking sheet with olive oil. Place the eggplant slices on the trays in a single layer. Lightly brush the top side of the eggplant slices with remaining oil. If you did not sweat the eggplant, sprinkle with salt now.
2. Bake in oven for 15 to 20 minutes until tender and lightly browned. When eggplants are done cooking, remove and reduce oven to 400 F. Allow eggplant to rest until cool enough to handle.
3. While eggplants are baking and cooling, prepare the sauce. Add about a tablespoon of olive oil to skillet and heat over medium until oil begins to shimmer. Sauté onions until they begin to soften. Add garlic and sausage. Chop sausage as it cooks and sauté until all pink is gone.
4. Add wine and deglaze skillet (scrape brown bits from bottom of pan). Cook until wine reduced by half.
5. Crush canned tomatoes by hand and add to the skillet along with their juices. Add paste.
6. Add remaining olive oil. Add herbs (see Frankie's Tips), and salt and pepper to taste.
7. You're now ready to assemble. Place a layer of the meat sauce in the bottom of the baking dish (9x9 would be a good size). Place a single layer of eggplant atop sauce.
8. Top with half of your cheese.
9. For the second layer, do a layer of sauce, then eggplant, a little more sauce, then top with cheeses.
10. Cover baking dish with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Remove foil and bake an additional 10-12 minutes until cheese is bubbly and nicely browned.
11. Allow to rest ten minutes before slicing.
12. Put on some nice Italian music, pour a glass of your favorite dinner beverage (I like with a nice Italian red wine), and give thanks to God for his bountiful gifts! Buon appetito!



Frankie's Tips:

- ◆ Eggplant will soak up oil like a sponge. Brush lightly or the finished dish will be very oily.
- ◆ Sweating the eggplant is completely optional. It will make it slightly less bitter. The method I prefer is to salt the eggplant and then lay the slices on paper towels on a baking sheet. Cover with a second layer of paper towels, then place a second baking sheet on top and weigh it down with something weighty like a can of tomatoes (or you put them in a colander with a weight on top).
- ◆ Some people (my wife included), don't care for the skin on the eggplant which can be tough. Feel free to remove the skin with a sharp peeler or paring knife. I prefer it on. At times I have removed part of it (in stripes), which can be a nice happy medium.
- ◆ You can cook eggplant any number of ways: grill it, oven roast it, or cook it in a skillet. It was a nice day when I made this so I grilled mine on my gas barbecue. My other preferred method is to roast it in the oven.
- ◆ In this sauce recipe I do not tell you how much herbs to use, or even what type. I grow my own herbs. The only one I dry is my oregano. In summer I typically use fresh herbs, basil, oregano and Italian Parsley. I made this in the autumn so I used dried oregano and fresh Italian parsley. Any will work well. Use what you prefer, and to your taste, keeping in mind that if using dried herbs you only need about one-third of the quantity (by volume) as when using fresh herbs.