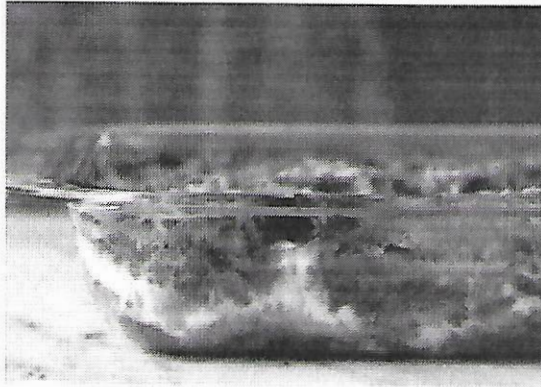


# Eggplant Parmesan



First cut the eggplant and salt the eggplant rounds. Then prep the rest of the ingredients while the eggplant rounds are releasing their moisture.

**Yield:** Serves 8

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/4 lbs (about 2 large) eggplants
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
  
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove minced garlic (about 1 teaspoon)
- 1 28-oz can whole peeled tomatoes (preferably San Marzano), tomatoes diced, reserve juices
- 1/2 cup finely chopped fresh basil
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
  
- 1 1/2 cups breadcrumbs
- 1 1/4 cups grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 3/4 cup flour
- 4 eggs, beaten (more if needed)
- 1/4 cup olive oil (plus more to oil the sheet pans)
- 1 1/2 pounds fresh mozzarella, sliced into 1/4-inch slices

## METHOD

**1 Slice and salt eggplant, let drain:** Slice the eggplants into 1/4-inch to 1/2-inch thick rounds. Lay the eggplant slices out on a rack over a rimmed sheet pan (or on several layers of paper towels).

Sprinkle both sides of the eggplant rounds lightly with salt. Let the eggplant rounds sit and release moisture for 2 hours.

**2 Sauté garlic, add tomatoes, simmer, add salt, pepper, basil:** Heat 1 Tbsp olive oil in a 4-quart saucepan on medium heat. Add the minced garlic and gently cook for 1 minute or until fragrant.

Add the tomatoes and their juices. Increase heat to bring to a simmer, lower heat to maintain a very low simmer for 15 minutes, uncovered. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add the minced basil and remove from heat.

**3 Make breadcrumb Parmesan mixture, set up bowls for dredging with flour, egg, breadcrumbs:** Combine 1 1/2 cups of breadcrumbs with 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, and place in a shallow bowl or rimmed dish.

Set up your station so that you have flour in one shallow bowl, beaten eggs in another bowl, and the breadcrumb cheese mixture in another, in that order.

**4 Dredge eggplant rounds in flour, egg, breadcrumbs, top with olive oil:** Preheat the oven to 425°F. Spread a tablespoon of olive oil each over the bottom of two rimmed baking sheet pans. Pat dry the eggplant slices with paper towels.

Working one at a time dredge the eggplant slices first in the flour, then dip in the beaten eggs, and then dredge in the breadcrumb parmesan cheese mixture.

Place on oiled sheet pan. Drizzle a little oil over the top of each breaded eggplant round.

**5 Bake eggplant rounds:** Place breaded prepared eggplant slices in the oven. Cook for 18 to 20 minutes at 425°F, turning the slices over at the half-way point, until they are nicely browned. Remove from oven, and let cool to touch.

**6 Layer sauce, eggplant rounds, cheeses in casserole dish:** Spread 1/2 cup of the tomato sauce over the bottom of a 9x13-inch casserole dish. Place a third of the eggplant rounds in a single layer covering the sauce on the bottom of the pan.

Layer half of the sliced mozzarella on top of the eggplant rounds. Sprinkle 1/3 cup of grated Parmesan cheese.

Place another third of the eggplant rounds over the cheese. Spread 1 cup of the sauce over the eggplant rounds. Layer the rest of the sliced mozzarella over the sauce. Sprinkle with 1/3 cup of grated Parm.

Add the remaining eggplant in a single layer on top of the cheese. Top with the remaining sauce and the remaining Parmesan.

**7 Bake:** Bake uncovered at 350°F for 35 minutes. Remove from oven and let sit for 10 minutes before cutting into to serve.

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