



# Eggplant Parmesan

## Ingredients

- Canola or olive oil cooking spray
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 2 medium eggplants (about 2 lbs total), cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick rounds
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 (24-ounce) jar no-salt-added tomato sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup torn fresh basil leaves, plus more for garnish
- 2 cloves garlic, grated
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided

## Instructions

### Step 1: Prep the Oven & Pans

Preheat oven to 400°F and position racks in the middle and lower thirds. Lightly coat two baking sheets and a 9×13-inch baking dish with cooking spray.

### Step 2: Bread the Eggplant

In a shallow bowl, whisk together the eggs and water. In a separate dish, combine panko breadcrumbs,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup Parmesan, and Italian seasoning. Dip each eggplant slice into the egg mixture, then coat with the breadcrumb mixture, pressing gently to help it stick.

### Step 3: Bake the Eggplant

Arrange the breaded eggplant slices in a single layer on the prepared baking sheets. Spray both sides generously with cooking spray. Bake for about 30 minutes, flipping the slices and rotating the pans halfway through, until golden brown and tender. Season with salt and pepper once baked.

### Step 4: Make the Sauce

In a medium bowl, stir together the tomato sauce, basil, grated garlic, and red pepper flakes.

### Step 5: Assemble the Casserole

Spread  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the sauce in the bottom of the prepared baking dish. Layer half of the eggplant

slices over the sauce. Top with 1 cup of sauce,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup Parmesan, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup mozzarella. Repeat the layers with the remaining eggplant, sauce, Parmesan, and mozzarella.

**Step 6: Bake & Serve**

Bake uncovered for 20 to 30 minutes, until the sauce is bubbling and the cheese is golden and melty. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving. Garnish with extra fresh basil, if desired.