

Brooklyn's Chicken Parmigiana on Focaccia



Serves 6



450°F



Difficulty: 3/5

Ingredients

For The Focaccia:

- ½ cup (4 fl. oz./125 ml) warm water (109–115°F)
- 2 ¼ teaspoons active dry yeast
- 3 teaspoons sugar, divided
- 6 ¼ cups (750 g) bread flour
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 ½ cups room-temperature water (70–74°F)
- 10 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed

For The Tomato Sauce:

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 6 pieces, divided
- ½ yellow onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
- 1 can (28 oz) whole peeled San Marzano tomatoes with juices
- 1 Parmesan rind, about 2 inches long
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. To make the focaccia: in a small bowl, whisk together the ½ cup of warm water with the yeast and 1 ½ teaspoons of the sugar. Cover loosely with a kitchen towel and allow to bloom for 5 minutes. The mixture should look foamy and alive.
2. Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook, combine the remaining sugar with the bread flour, salt and room temperature water. Mix on low speed until just combined.
3. With the mixer on low, slowly add the yeast mixture. When most of the water is absorbed into the dough (you can use your hands to hand-knead in the bowl to encourage absorption) increase speed to medium high and mix until dough is smooth and elastic. It should detach from the sides of the bowl, but stick to the bottom. The dough will be on the wetter side.
4. Coat the inside of a large bowl with a few Tablespoons of olive oil, then Scrape the dough into the prepared bowl and turn to coat with the oil. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let stand in a warm spot until doubled in size, about 2 ½ hours.
5. Coat the inside of a 9x13-inch baking dish with olive oil.
6. Fold the dough over itself in the bowl to deflate slightly, then transfer the dough to the prepared baking dish. Using lightly oiled hands, gently stretch the dough out to the edges and corners of the pan. If the dough springs back toward the center or is too tough to stretch, cover with a kitchen towel and let stand for 10 minutes to allow the gluten to relax, then repeat to stretch the dough.

7. Cover the dish with oiled plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight.
8. One hour before baking, remove from the refrigerator and let it stand in a warm spot for 1 hour.
9. Preheat an oven to 450°F.
10. Remove plastic wrap from the pan and use lightly oiled fingers to dimple the dough.
11. Drizzle with a few Tablespoons of olive oil and sprinkle with flake salt.
12. Bake until the focaccia is deep golden brown, and the internal temperature reads 200F.
13. Transfer the baking sheet to a wire rack and let the focaccia cool for 10 minutes.
14. To make the tomato sauce: in a medium sauté pan over medium heat, melt half the butter. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, about 5 minutes.
15. Add the tomatoes and their juices, remaining butter, Parmesan rind and 1 tsp. salt.
16. Bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally and crushing the tomatoes as they slowly cook down, until the tomatoes are mostly crushed and the sauce is reduced slightly, about 30 minutes. Remove from heat and discard parmesan rind. Use an immersion blender to smooth the sauce to desired consistency. Season “to taste” with salt, as needed. Set aside the heat. (The sauce can be made up to 4 days in advance; let cool completely, then cover and refrigerate until ready to use.)



Italy

Ingredients

For The Chicken Parmesan:

- 1 cup (120g) all purpose flour
Kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 whole eggs
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 3 cups panko (240g)
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano Cheese, plus more for serving
- 6 small skinless, boneless chicken thighs or breasts, pounded ¼-inch-thick
- ¾ cup neutral oil, like avocado, sunflower or vegetable
- 12 oz. whole milk Italian Style mozzarella cheese
Parmigiano-Reggiano Cheese, for serving
Basil leaves, torn (optional), for serving



For a vegetarian version, swap chicken for eggplant!

Slice the eggplant into ½" slices. Season the slices generously with kosher salt and set in a single layer on rack set inside a sheet tray to drain for 30 minutes or up to 1 hour. Wipe the salt and excess moisture off the eggplant, patting the eggplant really dry before proceeding to breading step.

Instructions (cont.)

17. To make the chicken parmesan: Preheat the broiler of your oven with the rack set in the upper third.
18. Set up a dredging station. In a wide shallow bowl or large dish, combine flour with a big pinch of kosher salt and a few grinds of black pepper. In another wide shallow bowl or dish, whisk together the eggs, a pinch of kosher salt and black pepper and garlic powder. In a third wide shallow bowl or dish, combine panko with parmesan cheese.
19. Pat the pounded chicken dry with paper towels, then salt lightly on both sides. Working with one piece of chicken at a time, dredge chicken in flour, shaking off any excess, then into the eggs and finally the panko, being sure to coat the entire piece of chicken. Place on a wire rack set inside a sheet tray while you prepare the rest of the chicken and heat the oil.
20. In a wide skillet, heat the oil over medium high until hot. To test oil, drop a couple pieces of panko into the oil. If panko immediately begins to sizzle and brown, the oil is ready.
21. Fry chicken, two pieces at a time so as to not overcrowd the pan, until golden brown and cooked through (internal temp should read 165F), about 2 minutes per side. If panko is getting too browned, adjust heat as needed.
22. Transfer chicken to a clean wire rack set inside a sheet tray and season lightly with salt. Top each piece of chicken with about ⅓ cup of the tomato sauce, or more or less, as desired. Then top each piece of chicken with 2 oz. of the mozzarella. Transfer to the oven

- under the broiler until the cheese is melted and bubbling, about 2 minutes.
23. To build the sandwiches: Cut the focaccia into 6 squares, then slice in half horizontally. If desired, toast focaccia under the broiler for a few minutes. Lay chicken parmesan on the bottom halves of the focaccia, then sprinkle with more parmesan, the basil, if using and top with top slice of focaccia. Serve warm.



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