Crunchy Oven-Fried Zucchini Sticks

Description

Even the pickiest vegetable eater will be sure to love these crispy-on-the-outside, tender-on-the-inside bites of zucchini. Coated in a combination of panko crumbs and finely shredded provolone cheese, they develop a nice crunch in the oven, making them a lot healthier (and easier to make) than a fried version.

Summary

Yield: 4
Prep Time: 45 minutes
Category: Vegetables
Cuisine: American
Tags: Football

Ingredients

- 1 lb zucchini about 4 medium
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp milk
- 1 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs
- 3/4 cup finely shredded provolone cheese (see notes)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F and line 2 baking sheets with parchment.

Trim the ends from the zucchini and halve them lengthwise.

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Cut each half crosswise into 3 to 4-inch lengths, then each piece lengthwise again into 1/2-inch wide strips.

Combine the flour, salt, garlic powder and black pepper in a large zip-top plastic bag.

Add about half of the zucchini strips and shake the bag to coat them with the flour.

Transfer to a plate and repeat with the remaining zucchini.

Whisk the eggs and milk together in a shallow dish.

Combine the panko crumbs and shredded cheese on a large sheet of wax paper and set it next to the egg mixture.

Using tongs, dip the zucchini strips, one at a time into the egg mixture, being sure to coat them on all sides.

Next, coat them with the panko-cheese mixture.

For an easy method of doing this, rather than turning the zucchini with the tongs, place a strip in the center of the pile of crumbs, then lift the edge of the wax paper to "bury" the zucchini in more crumbs. You'll lose very little of the egg mixture this way and the coating will adhere better.

Transfer the zucchini to the parchment lined baking sheets and spray the tops lightly with nonstick spray (or use an oil mister if you have one).

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Bake until the coating is crisp and lightly browned and the zucchini is tender but not mushy, 18 to 22 minutes.

Be sure to rotate the sheets in the oven once or twice to ensure even cooking.

Dust the zucchini with a little extra salt and pepper as soon as they come out of the oven.

Serve immediately, either plain or with warm marinara sauce for dipping.

Notes

About the cheese:

We like the texture and pungent flavor that finely shredded cheese adds to the zucchini. You can shred your own provolone or asiago, or use a good quality store-bought variety (Sargento Chef Blend Six-Cheese Italian is a good choice).