

Roasted Cauliflower

Ingredients

Cauliflower, whole head	1 large (2-3 lbs.)	Lemon juice	2 Tbsp.
Olive oil	¼ cup	Salt	1 tsp.
Garlic cloves, minced	4	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Fresh thyme leaves	2 Tbsp.	Parmesan cheese, grated	½ cup
Fresh rosemary, chopped	1 Tbsp.	Pork rinds, crushed	1 cup
Garlic powder	½ tsp.	Gluten-free flour blend	2 Tbsp.
Onion powder	½ tsp.	Butter, melted	2 Tbsp.
Smoked paprika	¼ tsp.		
Lemon zest	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

Preheat oven to $425^{\circ}F$ — Line a baking sheet with parchment paper — Bring a large pot of salted water to boil — Prepare an ice bath — Crush **pork rinds** in food processor or by hand; set aside in *Medium Bowl #1* — Mince **garlic**; set aside in *Small Bowl #1* — Chop **thyme** and **rosemary**; combine in *Small Bowl #2* — Zest and juice **lemon**; set zest in *Small Bowl #3* and juice in *Small Bowl #4*

1. Remove the outer leaves from the **cauliflower** and trim the stem, keeping the head intact. Carefully cut out the core with a small knife, ensuring the head remains whole.
2. Blanch the **cauliflower** by carefully lowering the head into the boiling water, stem-side up. Boil for *3-4 minutes*, then transfer to the ice bath for *1 minute* to stop the cooking process. Drain thoroughly and pat dry with paper towels.
3. In *Small Bowl #5*, mix ¼ cup **olive oil**, minced **garlic** (*Small Bowl #1*), **thyme** and **rosemary** (*Small Bowl #2*), ½ tsp. **garlic powder**, ½ tsp. **onion powder**, ¼ tsp. **smoked paprika**, **lemon zest** (1 Tbsp., *Small Bowl #3*), 1 Tbsp. **lemon juice** (*Small Bowl #4*), 1 tsp. **salt**, and ½ tsp. **pepper**.
4. Place the **cauliflower** stem-side down on the prepared baking sheet. Brush the entire surface generously with the herb oil mixture (*Small Bowl #5*), ensuring it gets between the florets.
5. Roast in the preheated oven for *40 minutes*, brushing with more herb oil mixture (*Small Bowl #5*) halfway through cooking.
6. While roasting, prepare the crust mixture: In *Medium Bowl #2*, combine crushed **pork rinds** (1 cup, *Medium Bowl #1*), grated **Parmesan** (½ cup), 2 Tbsp. **gluten-free flour**, remaining 1 Tbsp. **lemon juice** (*Small Bowl #4*), and 2 Tbsp. melted **butter**. Mix until it forms a coarse, slightly moist mixture.

7. After *40 minutes* of roasting, remove the **cauliflower** and carefully press the crust mixture onto the top and sides of the cauliflower. Return to the oven and roast for an additional *15-20 minutes* until the crust is golden brown and the cauliflower is tender when pierced with a knife.
8. Let rest for *5 minutes* before transferring to a serving platter. Slice into wedges and serve hot.

Equipment Required

- Large pot (6-8 quart) for blanching
- Large bowl for ice bath
- Rimmed baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Small mixing bowl for herb oil
- Medium mixing bowl for crust mixture
- Pastry brush or spoon for coating
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Food processor or zip-top bag and rolling pin (for crushing pork rinds)
- Microplane or zester
- Citrus juicer
- Kitchen towel or paper towels
- Serving platter

Mise en Place

- Prepare the **cauliflower** by removing leaves and trimming stem before preheating the oven
- Crush **pork rinds** and store in airtight container until needed
- Prepare herb oil mixture before blanching the cauliflower
- Set up ice bath before bringing water to boil
- Have all ingredients measured and ready before beginning cooking process

Ingredient Tips

- Choose a firm, compact **cauliflower** with tight florets and no brown spots
- For maximum flavor, use freshly grated **Parmesan** rather than pre-grated
- Plain, unflavored **pork rinds** work best as a neutral crispy base
- Verify your **gluten-free flour blend** contains xanthan gum; if not, add ¼ tsp.
- Use high-quality cold-pressed **olive oil** for best flavor

- Fresh herbs provide superior flavor, but dried can be substituted (1 tsp. dried thyme, ½ tsp. dried rosemary)
- For extra richness, substitute some of the olive oil with duck fat or schmaltz
- Check that your **Parmesan** is truly gluten-free (some brands use anti-caking agents)

Preparation Tips

- The blanching step is crucial for ensuring the cauliflower cooks evenly
- Thoroughly dry the cauliflower after blanching to ensure proper browning
- Apply herb oil generously between florets for maximum flavor penetration
- If crust browns too quickly, cover loosely with foil
- Test for doneness by inserting a knife into the thickest part - it should enter easily
- For extra browning on the crust, broil for the final *1-2 minutes* (watch carefully)
- Adjust roasting time based on cauliflower size - larger heads may need an additional *10-15 minutes*
- Let the cauliflower rest before cutting to allow juices to redistribute

Make Ahead & Storage

- Herb oil can be prepared up to *24 hours* in advance and refrigerated
- **Pork rind** mixture can be prepared *4 hours* ahead and stored at room temperature
- The entire dish can be blanched and prepared up to the roasting step *4 hours* in advance
- Leftover cauliflower can be refrigerated for up to *3 days*
- Reheat leftovers in a *350°F* oven for *10-15 minutes* until warmed through

Serving Suggestions

- Present whole on a serving platter and carve at the table for dramatic effect
- Serve alongside **Dad's Brussels Sprouts** for a vegetable-forward meal
- Pairs beautifully with roasted meats, particularly lamb or beef
- Drizzle with extra herb oil just before serving for added freshness
- Garnish with additional fresh herbs and lemon wedges
- For a complete meal, serve with a gluten-free grain like quinoa or millet
- Accompany with a crisp white wine such as Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc