

# Fried Eggplant

By Lidey Heuck

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**Total Time** 45 minutes

**Prep Time** 5 minutes

**Cook Time** 40 minutes

**Rating** ★★★★☆ (36)



Christopher Testani for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

These crispy breaded eggplant rounds make a delicious appetizer served with [marinara sauce](#) for dipping. The key to tender, creamy eggplant with a crisp, crunchy coating is slicing the eggplant thinly and salting it to draw out excess moisture before breading. Coated in seasoned panko, the eggplant rounds cook in under 3 minutes, meaning you can fry the whole batch in under 15 minutes and serve the rounds piping hot. If you're planning ahead, you can also bread the eggplant slices and refrigerate them on a paper towel lined plate for several hours before frying.

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## INGREDIENTS

**Yield:** 6 servings (20 slices)

1 large globe eggplant, sliced into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick rounds (about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  pounds)

Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal) and black pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup all-purpose flour

2 large eggs

3 cups panko bread crumbs

2 teaspoons Italian seasoning

1 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons garlic powder

1 cup canola oil, for frying

Chopped fresh parsley, for serving

Marinara sauce, for dipping (optional)

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## PREPARATION

### Step 1

Place the eggplant slices in a large bowl, sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt and toss to evenly coat. Set aside for 10 to 20 minutes, then use a clean dish towel or paper towels to pat each slice dry, absorbing any water that has been released.

### Step 2

Meanwhile, place the flour in a shallow bowl or rimmed plate. Crack the eggs into a second bowl and beat them with a fork. In a third bowl, combine the panko, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon pepper.

### Step 3

Working one at a time, dip the eggplant rounds into the flour, shaking off any excess, then into the egg mixture, and finally, into the panko mixture, coating each piece completely. Place on a paper towel lined plate until ready to cook.

### Step 4

Pour the oil into a large, heavy-bottomed skillet or Dutch oven and heat over medium-high. When the oil is hot (it should sizzle immediately if you drop a breadcrumb into the pan), carefully place a few eggplant slices in the pan. Adjust heat to medium and cook for 1 to 2 minutes on each side, until golden brown on both sides.

### **Step 5**

Transfer to the prepared plate, sprinkle lightly with salt and repeat with the remaining eggplant, adjusting the heat as necessary to prevent smoking. Sprinkle the eggplant with parsley and serve hot, with marinara sauce for dipping if you like.

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