

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Servings: 4 (Makes about 12 fritters)

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The Golden Crisp of Summer

There is something undeniably magical about the humble zucchini. It's versatile, abundant in summer gardens, and acts as a perfect canvas for bold flavors. But let's be honest: zucchini can sometimes be a bit... soggy.

Enter the Crispy Zucchini & Cheese Fritter.

This recipe is the antidote to the bland, watery vegetable side dish. By combining grated zucchini with salty, melty cheese, aromatic herbs, and a binding agent, we transform this garden staple into golden medallions of pure joy. The exterior shatters with a satisfying crunch, while the inside remains creamy, savory, and light.

Whether you serve these as a vegetarian main course with a dollop of tzatziki, a side dish to a roast chicken, or a fancy appetizer at your next dinner party, these fritters are guaranteed to disappear faster than you can fry them.

Ingredients

To achieve the perfect texture, we need a balance of moisture, binding, and flavor.

The Base

- 2 lbs (approx. 900g) Zucchini (about 3–4 medium zucchini)
- 1 tsp Salt (for drawing out moisture)

The Flavor & Binder

- 2 large Eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup (100g) Panko Breadcrumbs (plus extra for coating if needed)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (75g) Parmesan Cheese, freshly grated (use the good stuff, not the shaker can)

- ½ cup (50g) Sharp Cheddar or Mozzarella, shredded (for that cheese pull)
- 3 cloves Garlic, minced
- ¼ cup Fresh Parsley, chopped
- 2 tbsp Fresh Dill, chopped (or 1 tsp dried)
- 2 Scallions (Green Onions), thinly sliced
- ½ tsp Black Pepper
- ¼ tsp Nutmeg (secret ingredient for depth)

For Frying

- ½ cup Olive Oil or Avocado Oil (for shallow frying)
- 1 tbsp Unsalted Butter (for flavor and browning)

Optional Dipping Sauce

- 1 cup Greek Yogurt

- 1 tbsp Lemon Juice
 - 1 tbsp Fresh Dill, chopped
 - 1 clove Garlic, grated
 - Salt and Pepper to taste
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Instructions

Phase 1: The Prep (Intensity: Low)

1. Grate and Salt the Zucchini

Wash and dry your zucchini. Do not peel them; the skin adds color and nutrients. Using the large holes of a box grater (or a food processor with a shredding disc), grate the zucchini. Place the grated zucchini in a colander over a bowl. Sprinkle with the 1 teaspoon of salt and toss gently. Let it sit for 10–15 minutes. *This step is non-negotiable; if you skip it, your fritters will be soggy.*

2. The Squeeze (The Most Important Step)

After the zucchini has sweat, grab a handful at a time and squeeze it vigorously over the sink (or wrap it all in a clean kitchen towel and wring it out). You want to remove as much liquid as possible. *Note: You should be surprised by how much water comes out—often ½ to 1 cup!* Place the dry zucchini in a large mixing bowl.

Phase 2: The Mix (Intensity: Low)

3. Combine the Ingredients

To the bowl with the dry zucchini, add the beaten eggs, Panko breadcrumbs, Parmesan, cheddar/mozzarella, minced garlic, parsley, dill, scallions, black pepper, and nutmeg. Mix with a fork or your hands until everything is evenly distributed. The mixture should be moist but hold together when squeezed. If it feels too wet, add another tablespoon of Panko. If it feels too dry, add a tiny splash of milk.

4. Form the Fritters

Using your hands, scoop up about 2 tablespoons of the mixture. Roll it into a ball, then flatten it slightly into a patty about ½ inch thick. Place the formed fritters on a parchment-lined baking sheet while you heat the oil.

Phase 3: The Fry (Intensity: Medium-High)

5. Heat the Pan

In a large, heavy-bottomed skillet (cast iron is excellent here), heat the olive oil and butter over medium-high heat. The oil is ready when a tiny piece of the zucchini mixture sizzles immediately upon contact. You want it hot enough to crisp, but not so hot that the butter burns.

6. The Golden Sear

Carefully place 4–5 fritters in the pan. Do not overcrowd—crowding steams the fritters instead of frying them. Cook for 3–4 minutes per side, or until deep golden brown and crispy. Flip carefully with a thin spatula.

7. Drain and Season

Transfer the cooked fritters to a plate lined with paper towels to drain excess oil. Immediately sprinkle with a pinch of flaky sea salt.

8. Repeat

Continue with the remaining mixture, adding a little more oil to the pan if needed. If the pan gets too dark, wipe it out and start fresh with new oil to prevent a burnt taste.

Phase 4: The Dip (Intensity: Low)

9. Make the Sauce

While the fritters drain (or ahead of time), combine the Greek yogurt, lemon juice, dill, garlic, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Stir well.

Recipe Notes & Tips

- **The Moisture Rule:** If your fritters fall apart in the pan, it means there was too much moisture. Next time, squeeze the zucchini harder, or add an extra tablespoon of breadcrumbs.
- **Cheese Choice:** Parmesan is essential for the salty, umami backbone. However, you can swap the secondary cheese. Feta is a great alternative for a Greek twist, but reduce the added salt slightly.
- **Make it Gluten-Free:** Simply swap the Panko for gluten-free breadcrumbs or crushed pork rinds (for a Keto version).
- **Air Fryer Option:** Preheat the air fryer to 400°F (200°C). Spray the fritters generously with oil spray. Cook for 10–12 minutes, flipping halfway, until golden. They won't be quite as crispy as pan-fried, but they are a healthier alternative.
- **Make Ahead:** You can form the patties and keep them in the fridge for up to 24 hours before frying. You can also freeze the uncooked patties; fry them directly from frozen, adding a few extra minutes to the cook time.

Nutrition Information

Disclaimer: Nutritional information is an estimate and will vary based on specific ingredients and portion sizes.

Serving Size: 3 Fritters (without dipping sauce)

- Calories: 320
- Total Fat: 22g
- Saturated Fat: 7g
- Trans Fat: 0g
- Cholesterol: 95mg
- Sodium: 620mg
- Total Carbohydrate: 16g
- Dietary Fiber: 2g
- Total Sugars: 3g

- Protein: 14g