

## **Eggplant Parmesan Crisps**

Makes 20 crisps



- 6 ounces finely grated Parmesan cheese
  - 1 medium Japanese eggplant, sliced in ¼ inch slices
  - Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
  - ¼ cup flour
  - 1 egg, beaten
  - 1 cup panko bread crumbs
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- ¼ cup olive oil
  - ½ cup tomato sauce
  - 6 ounces smoked mozzarella cheese, shredded

Place rack in the middle of the oven and preheat to 300 degrees.

For the crisps, using a tablespoon measure, place cheese in mounds onto a nonstick silicone pad or greased parchment paper-lined cookie sheet. Flatten the mounds with the back of a spoon, making sure they are at least 4 inches apart. Bake for 5 to 6 minutes or until golden. Set aside. Turn oven to 375 degrees.

Generously season the eggplant slices with salt and pepper on both sides. Dredge the slices in the flour, tapping off excess, then dip in the beaten egg, and finally in the panko to coat on all sides.

In a medium non-stick pan, heat ½ of the oil. Working in batches, fry the eggplant until golden brown on both sides. Add more oil if necessary as you start each batch. Drain on a paper towels.



Place all the eggplant slices on a sheet pan. Add about ½ teaspoon of tomato sauce (you can use your favorite jar sauce) on top of each slice, and top with a small amount of mozzarella cheese. Place in oven until the cheese melts, about 3 minutes.

To assemble, carefully place each eggplant stack on top of a parmesan crisp.

*The good news: This is an appetizer that is delicious and is sure to impress your guests. The bad news: It needs to be assembled at the last minute. So make the crisps, and make the eggplant stacks, but don't put them together until ready to serve.*

**Wine Pairing** – Villa del Monte 2006 Merlot Reserve, Carneros Moon Vineyard or Villa del Monte 2011 Pinot Noir Santa Cruz Mountains, Regan Vineyard