

Ingredients:

For the Eggplant:

- 1 medium eggplant (about 1 lb)
- 1 tsp + ½ tsp salt, divided
- ½ cup flour
- 1/8 tsp pepper
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 1 ½ cups panko breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup grated parmesan
- 1 tbsp Italian seasoning
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- Olive oil cooking spray

For the Basil Chive Vinaigrette:

- 1 cup basil, packed
- 1 heaping tbsp chives, chopped
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 small clove garlic, smashed
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper

To serve:

- 3 heirloom tomatoes, sliced
- 1 ball burrata
- Flaky salt, to taste

Directions:

1. Prepare the eggplant: Slice and remove both ends off the eggplant, then slice eggplant to roughly ½ inch thick slices. Line a large baking tray with paper towels, and arrange eggplant slices on the paper towel. Sprinkle 1 tsp salt on both sides of the cut eggplant. Let sit for 25-30 mins.
2. Meanwhile, make the Basil Chive Vinaigrette: To a small food processor or blender, add basil, chives, vinegar, garlic, olive oil, ½ tsp salt, and ¼ tsp pepper. Process until smooth. Set aside.
3. Prepare the eggplant breading station: To a shallow bowl, add flour, ½ tsp salt, and 1/8 tsp pepper. Mix to combine. To a second shallow bowl, add well beaten eggs. To a third shallow bowl, add panko, parmesan, Italian seasoning, and garlic powder. Mix to combine. Set aside.
4. Blot both sides of the eggplant with a paper towel to absorb the moisture and extra salt. Remove the wet paper towels, and line the baking sheet with parchment paper. Take a slice of eggplant and dredge both sides in the flour mix, shaking off any excess flour. Dip the eggplant in the beaten egg to coat both sides, and let any excess drip off. Place the eggplant slice in panko mix, and press gently to adhere the mix to both sides. Transfer to parchment lined baking sheet, and repeat with remaining slices. Spritz the top of the eggplant with olive oil cooking spray.
5. Preheat air fryer to 390 degrees. Place eggplant, oiled side down, in a single layer in the basket. Spritz the top of the eggplant

with cooking spray, and air fry for 5 mins. Flip the eggplant slices, spritz the tops with cooking spray again, and cook an additional 4-5 mins until the eggplant slices are golden brown. Transfer cooked eggplant to a wire rack, and repeat with remaining slices as necessary.

6. Assemble the caprese: Arrange eggplant and tomato slices around the edges a round serving platter, alternating between eggplant and tomato, and slightly overlapping them. Place ball of burrata in the center of the dish, and cut an "X" in the center to break it open. Season the tomatoes and burrata with a pinch of flaky salt. Drizzle basil chive vinaigrette, to taste, over the eggplant, tomatoes, and burrata. Enjoy!

Recipe notes:

*I recommend using freshly grated parmesan as opposed to the shelf stable parmesan that comes in a can. You can also buy freshly grated parmesan in the cheese section of the grocery store, and that works great here too.

*Using a wire rack to hold the cooked eggplant while other batches are cooking helps to prevent the eggplant from getting soggy on the bottom. Nobody wants that!

*This recipe for basil chive vinaigrette makes more than you'll likely need. Whatever you don't drizzle on the caprese, serve on the side for extra dipping/drizzling. Leftovers are great on soooo many things...eggs, shrimp/chicken, pasta. You can even freeze some of it in large silicone ice cube trays. Then, you can have a fresh, herbaceous sauce at all times once you thaw it out.

*This Ninja Foodi air fryer is the one I use, and I LOVE it!