

Cheesy Fried Okra Bites: Crispy, Spicy & Irresistibly Stuffed

Cheese-Stuffed Fried Okra Bites



OVEN
350°F

TIME
5 min

METHOD
Air fryer

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

20 large fresh okra pods
4 oz Pepper Jack cheese, cut into thin matchstick slices
1 cup buttermilk
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional, for extra heat)
2 large eggs
1 cup cornmeal
Vegetable oil for frying
Toothpicks (optional, for securing stuffed okra)

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Prepare : Okra:** Give your okra pods a good rinse under cool water, then gently pat them thoroughly dry with a clean towel. This helps the coating stick better.
- 2. Slice and : Stuff:** Carefully slice each okra pod lengthwise, creating a pocket or slit without cutting all the way through the other side. You want to make a perfect little cavity for the cheese. Gently stuff those pockets with the thin matchstick slices of Pepper Jack cheese. If you'd like to ensure the cheese stays put during frying, you can use a toothpick to secure the opening, though it's often not strictly necessary if you don't overstuff.
- 3. Set : Up Breeding Station:** Prepare your breeding station with three separate bowls: Bowl 1: Pour the buttermilk.
- 4. Bowl 2:** In this bowl, whisk together the all-purpose flour with the salt, black pepper, smoked paprika, and the optional cayenne pepper.
- 5. Bowl 3:** In this bowl, whisk the cornmeal with the 2 large beaten eggs until well combined. This is a slightly unconventional breeding method but works wonderfully for these.
- 6. Coat : Okra:** Take each stuffed okra pod and dip it first into the flour mix, ensuring it's completely dusted. Shake off any excess flour. Next, dip it into the buttermilk, letting any excess drip off. Finally, roll it thoroughly in the cornmeal and egg mixture until it's nicely and evenly coated all over. Repeat with all okra pods.
- 7. Heat : Oil:** Heat about 2-3 inches of vegetable oil in a deep skillet, Dutch oven, or deep fryer over medium-high heat until it reaches 350°F (175°C). Use

a kitchen thermometer for accuracy.

8. **Test : Oil:** Test the oil with a small piece of leftover batter (if you have any) or a tiny bit of okra coating-if it sizzles immediately and steadily, you're good to go!
9. **Fry : Okra:** Carefully lower the breaded okra pods into the hot oil in batches. Do not overcrowd the pan, as this will lower the oil temperature and result in greasy, rather than crispy, okra. Fry for about 3-4 minutes per batch, or until they're golden brown and deliciously crispy on all sides.
10. **Drain:** Remove the fried okra using a slotted spoon or spider and transfer them to a plate lined with paper towels to drain any excess oil.
11. **Serve:** Serve these crunchy, cheesy bites hot and fresh with your favorite dipping sauces like ranch dressing, chipotle aioli, or spicy ketchup. Enjoy every crispy, gooey bite!

SWAPS & NOTES

Okra: Use fresh, firm, unblemished large okra pods. Smaller pods can be harder to stuff.

Pepper Jack Cheese: The spicy kick of Pepper Jack is fantastic here, but you can use mozzarella, cheddar, or a blend of cheeses if you prefer a milder flavor or want to experiment.

Cut the cheese into thin, uniform matchsticks for easy stuffing.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Dry Okra is Key: Ensure the okra is very dry after rinsing; moisture can prevent the breading from sticking.

Don't Overstuff: Overstuffing the okra pods can cause the cheese to leak out during frying.

Maintain Oil Temperature: Consistent oil temperature is crucial for crispy, non-greasy fried foods.

If the oil drops too low, the okra will absorb oil; if too high, it will burn before the cheese melts.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/cheesy-fried-okra-bites-crispy-spicy-irresistibly-stuffed/>