

Cheesy Vegetarian Spaghetti Squash Parmesan: Cozy & Flavorful Dinner

Cheesy Vegetarian Spaghetti Squash Parmesan: A Cozy, Hearty Dish Packed with Flavor!



OVEN
400°F

TIME
30 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 2 small spaghetti squash (about 1.5 lbs each)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup freshly grated mozzarella cheese (plus extra if desired, for topping)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (divided for mix and topping)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole milk ricotta cheese
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning blend
- ... teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional, adjust for heat preference)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup marinara sauce (your favorite store-bought or homemade)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup panko breadcrumbs (regular or gluten-free)
- 1-2 tablespoons parsley or basil for topping (optional, chopped fresh)

Swaps and Notes:

- Spaghetti Squash:** Choose firm, blemish-free spaghetti squash. Smaller squash are easier to handle and portion.
- Cheese:** Freshly grated mozzarella and Parmesan melt best and have superior flavor. Whole milk ricotta provides the creamiest filling.
- Garlic:** Freshly minced garlic is highly recommended for best flavor.
- Italian Seasoning:** A good quality blend is perfect.

You can also use a mix of dried oregano, basil, and thyme.

Crushed Red Pepper Flakes: Adds a subtle warmth. Omit for no heat, or increase for more spice.

Marinara Sauce: Use your favorite marinara or pasta sauce.

Panko Breadcrumbs: Panko creates a crispier topping. Regular fine breadcrumbs can be used as a substitute.

Herbs for Garnish: Fresh parsley or basil add a beautiful finishing touch and fresh aroma.

Directions:

Preheat Oven & Prep Squash: Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C). To prep the spaghetti squash, chop off the ends where the stem sits, creating a flat base. This makes them stable for slicing. Carefully slice each squash in half lengthwise and scoop out all the seeds and stringy bits—don't be shy, you want those noodle-like strands to shine!

Roast Squash: Place the squashes face down on a baking sheet. Roast them for about 30 minutes, or until they're tender enough to easily flake with a fork. The skin should be slightly browned.

Prepare Garlic & Cheese Mixes: While the squash roasts, take a moment to grate your cheeses and gather the remaining ingredients. In a small bowl, combine the minced garlic with a drizzle of olive oil and a pinch of salt. You can microwave this for about 30 seconds or sauté it on the stove for a few minutes until fragrant. In a separate mixing bowl, combine the whole milk ricotta cheese with half of the mozzarella (from the $\frac{3}{4}$ cup) and half of the Parmesan (from the $\frac{3}{4}$ cup), the sautéed garlic mixture, Italian seasoning, and crushed red pepper flakes (if using). Stir until well combined.

Fluff Squash & Fill: Once the squash is out of the oven and slightly cooled (cool enough to handle), use a fork to carefully fluff the insides, creating those spaghetti-like strands. Divide the prepared ricotta mixture evenly between the four roasted squash halves.

Top & Bake: Top each filled squash half with the rest of the mozzarella, a generous dollop of marinara sauce, and the remaining Parmesan cheese.

Sprinkle the panko breadcrumbs evenly on top of each squash half for that perfect golden crunch!

Final Bake: Pop the stuffed squash back in the oven for an extra 25 minutes, or until it's bubbling, the cheese is melted and lovely golden brown on top, and the panko is crispy.

Garnish & Serve: Finally, garnish with fresh herbs like chopped parsley or basil if desired. Serve hot and enjoy this cheesy, comfort-food classic that's sure to please!

Tips for Success:

Roast Squash Properly: Don't under-roast the squash. It needs to be tender enough to easily "noodle" with a fork.

Don't Overcook Garlic: Be careful not to burn the minced garlic; a quick microwave or light sauté is all it needs.

Freshly Grated Cheese: Always use freshly grated mozzarella and Parmesan for the best melt and flavor.

Adjust Seasoning: Taste the ricotta mixture and adjust salt and pepper before adding it to the squash.

Panko for Crunch: The panko breadcrumbs are essential for a crispy topping, so don't skip them! If you don't have panko, regular breadcrumbs will work but might be less crispy.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Making this :** Cheesy Vegetarian Spaghetti Squash Parmesan is a simple process of roasting, filling, and baking!
2. **Preheat : Oven & Prep Squash:** Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C). To prep the spaghetti squash, chop off the ends where the stem sits, creating a flat base. This makes them stable for slicing. Carefully slice each squash in half lengthwise and scoop out all the seeds and stringy bits-don't be shy, you want those noodle-like strands to shine!
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7. **Final : Bake:** Pop the stuffed squash back in the oven for an extra 25 minutes, or until it's bubbling, the cheese is melted and lovely golden brown on top, and the panko is crispy.
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9. **Tips for Success: Roast Squash Properly:** Don't under-roast the squash. It needs to be tender enough to easily "noodle" with a fork.
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12. **Adjust : Seasoning:** Taste the ricotta mixture and adjust salt and pepper before adding it to the squash.
13. **Panko for : Crunch:** The panko breadcrumbs are essential for a crispy topping, so don't skip them! If you don't have panko, regular breadcrumbs will work but might be less crispy.
14. **Serving Suggestions and Pairings:** This Cheesy Vegetarian Spaghetti Squash Parmesan is a complete and satisfying meal on its own, especially for a healthy weeknight dinner. It pairs beautifully with a crisp green salad with a light vinaigrette or a side of steamed broccoli. For other fantastic cheesy and comforting meals, you might also enjoy my Classic Spaghetti Recipe with Homemade Sauce (you could even top it with this spaghetti squash filling!).
15. **Storage and Leftover Tips:** Leftover Cheesy Vegetarian Spaghetti Squash Parmesan is delicious and reheats well. Store individual halves (or portions) in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. To reheat, warm in a microwave until heated through, or cover loosely with foil and bake in a 350°F (175°C) oven until bubbly and hot. If the topping has lost its crispness, you can remove the foil for the last few minutes. Freezing is generally not recommended for optimal texture.
16. **More Recipes You Will Love:** If you loved the cheesy goodness and comforting nature of this dish, here are a few more fantastic savory recipes that I think you'll absolutely love:
17. For a quick and easy way to feed a crowd with cheesy goodness, don't miss my These Sheet Pan Quesadillas Are My Favorite Way to Feed a Crowd Fast.
18. For a fun, customizable, and no-fuss meal perfect for entertaining, my This Walking Taco Bar Is My Favorite No-Fuss Way to Feed a Crowd is a fantastic choice.
19. For an incredibly cheesy and easy-to-make casual meal, my Easy Cheesy Chicken Sliders with Marinara Garlic Butter are always a hit!

20. And for a crowd-pleasing, cheesy dip, check out my [This Crockpot Nacho Dip Is the Reason I Never Have Leftovers](#).
21. Final Thoughts: This Cheesy Vegetarian Spaghetti Squash Parmesan is a true testament to how satisfying and delicious a healthy, vegetable-focused meal can be. It's packed with flavor, incredibly comforting, and a fantastic way to enjoy spaghetti squash. Give it a try, and enjoy this cheesy, comfort-food classic that's sure to please!
22. What's your favorite vegetable to turn into a hearty main dish? Share your ideas and feedback in the comments below, and don't forget to follow Chef Maniac for more delightful and inspiring recipes!

SWAPS & NOTES

Spaghetti Squash: Choose firm, blemish-free spaghetti squash. Smaller squash are easier to handle and portion.

Cheese: Freshly grated mozzarella and Parmesan melt best and have superior flavor.

Whole milk ricotta provides the creamiest filling.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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

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