

Mozzarella-Stuffed Onion Rings: The Ultimate Crispy, Cheesy Appetizer Recipe

Introduction: The Appetizer You Didn't Know You Needed



OVEN
350°F

TIME
3 min

METHOD
Air fryer

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

1 Large White or Yellow Onion: Look for the biggest one you can find to ensure you get plenty of "stretching" room for the cheese.

8 Mozzarella Cheese Sticks: String cheese works best here because it's low-moisture and easy to slice.

1 Cup Milk & 1 Beaten Egg: This creates the "glue" for our breading.

1 Cup Panko Breadcrumbs: For that signature loud crunch.

2 Cups Cooking Oil: Vegetable, canola, or peanut oil are best for frying.

The Dry Mix: 1 cup all-purpose flour, 1 tsp baking powder (for lift), and 1 tsp fine salt.

Tools: You will need plenty of toothpicks to secure the rings.

DIRECTIONS

1. Assemble the Rings: Slice your onion into thick rings (about 1/2 inch to 3/4 inch wide). Select one large ring and one slightly smaller ring. Place the smaller one inside the larger one, leaving a gap between the two walls. Slice your mozzarella sticks into thin strips and tuck them into that gap. Secure the "sandwich" by poking toothpicks through the outer onion, through the cheese, and into the inner onion.
2. Heat the Oil: In a heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven, heat your oil to 350°F (175°C). Using a thermometer is key here; if the oil is too cold, the rings will be greasy. If it's too hot, the outside will burn before the cheese melts.
3. The First Coat (Dredging): Whisk together your flour, baking powder, and salt. Dredge each assembled ring thoroughly in this dry mix. This creates a dry surface for the batter to cling to. Shake off the excess and set them on a wire rack.
4. Make the Batter: Take the remaining dry flour mixture and whisk in the milk and beaten egg until you have a smooth, thick batter.
5. Dip and Crumb: Dip each floured ring into the wet batter, let the excess drip off, and then drop it into the bowl of Panko. Press the crumbs into the ring to ensure total coverage. Pro Tip: For extra crunch, dip back into the batter and Panko a second time!
6. Fry to Golden Perfection: Carefully lower the rings into the oil. Fry in small batches for 2-3 minutes per side. You're looking for a deep, golden-brown hue.
7. Drain and Serve: Place the finished rings on a paper towel-lined plate. Crucial Step: Gently pull out the toothpicks while the rings are hot. Serve immediately.

for the best cheese pull.

SWAPS & NOTES

The Onion: I recommend a Vidalia or Sweet Onion if you prefer a milder, sweeter flavor.

If you want a sharper bite, a standard white onion is perfect.

The Cheese: While mozzarella is the gold standard for the "pull," you can experiment with Pepper Jack string cheese for a spicy kick.

Gluten-Free: You can easily swap the all-purpose flour for a 1:1 gluten-free blend and use gluten-free Panko.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

The Chill Factor: If you have time, pop the assembled (but un-breaded) rings into the freezer for 15 minutes.

This firms up the cheese so it doesn't leak out during the frying process.

Don't Overcrowd: Adding too many rings at once drops the oil temperature.

Low Moisture is King: Stick to string cheese.

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/mozzarella-stuffed-onion-rings-the-ultimate-crispy-cheesy-appetizer-recipe/>