

CRISPY PANKO-CRUSTED ZUCCHINI SLICES

Ingredients:

- 2 medium organic zucchinis, sliced into 1/4-inch rounds
- 1 cup Panko breadcrumbs (whole wheat for that extra fiber boost)
- ¼ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano or nutritional yeast (for my plant-based friends)
- 2 large pasture-raised eggs, beaten
- 2 tbsp arrowroot starch or tapioca flour (the secret to light dusting)
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano or Italian seasoning
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp freshly cracked black pepper
- Avocado oil spray (our high-smoke-point bestie)



Directions:

- **Preheat & Line:** Fire up your oven to 425°F and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Prefer the air fryer? Set it to 390°F.
- **The Sweat Session:** Lay your zucchini rounds on paper towels, sprinkle them with a pinch of sea salt, and let them hang out for 10 minutes. This draws out excess water so they get maximum crunch! Pat them completely dry.
- **Assemble Your Station:** Grab three shallow bowls. Bowl 1: arrowroot starch. Bowl 2: your whisked eggs. Bowl 3: the Panko, cheese (or nutritional yeast), garlic powder, oregano, salt, and pepper all mixed together.
- **Dredge, Dip, Repeat:** Take a zucchini slice, dust it lightly in arrowroot (shake off the extra), dip it in the egg wash, and then press it firmly into that flavorful Panko mixture. Make sure it's fully coated!
- **Arrange & Spritz:** Lay the slices in a single layer on your baking sheet or air fryer. Give them a quick spray of avocado oil to guarantee a perfect golden-brown finish.
- **Let's Get Crispy:**
 - *Oven:* Bake for 18-20 minutes, flipping halfway through.
 - *Air Fryer:* Cook for 8-10 minutes, giving the basket a gentle shake halfway.

Chef's Golden Rule

Don't skip the salt-and-dry step! Zucchini is naturally full of water (about 95%!). If you skip sweating them out, that moisture will trap right under the coating while cooking, giving you a soggy bite instead of a crisp crunch. Also, give them space on the pan-crowding means steaming, and we want to bake!

NUTRITION INFO:

ENERGY: 135 KCAL FAT: 4.5 CARBS: 8G PROTEIN: 7G FIBER: 2G CARBS: 16G

Glow From the Inside Out

The Gut-Loving, Cellular Benefits Behind the Crunch

Nourishing Your Gut & Body with Whole Ingredients

When we think about holistic health, we're looking at food as something that actively fuels and loves on our bodies at a cellular level. Take our star ingredient: zucchini. It isn't just a low-carb veggie; it's a phenomenal tool for your digestive tract. Zucchini is loaded with both soluble and insoluble fiber, meaning it acts as premium prebiotic fuel to feed and support the good bacteria living in your gut microbiome. When your gut thrives, your whole body feels it! Plus, it's rich in skin-loving antioxidants like lutein and zeaxanthin, alongside a hefty dose of Vitamin C to support natural collagen production and immune health.

The supporting cast packs a punch, too. Using pasture-raised eggs gives us highly bioavailable protein and choline, which our bodies love for brain health and liver metabolism. And let's talk about the herbs! Garlic powder and dried oregano aren't just for flavor; they deliver potent anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties. Oregano contains natural compounds like carvacrol and thymol, which work gently in the digestive tract to soothe irritation and help keep your gut flora perfectly balanced.

The Panko Switch: Why It Beats White Flour

Standard breaded recipes usually look like a heavy dust-up of refined white flour. The problem? White flour is highly processed, stripping away the fiber-rich bran and germ. This leaves behind a simple starch that converts into glucose almost immediately upon hitting your system, causing a sharp blood sugar spike and that inevitable post-meal crash. Switching things up with Panko is a total game-changer. Panko breadcrumbs are unique—traditionally baked using an electric current, they create airy, flaky crumbs rather than a dense powder. Because of this unique texture, Panko creates a beautiful, porous lattice around the zucchini. Instead of forming a heavy blanket that traps steam, it allows moisture to escape freely as it bakes. The result? A perfectly light, airy, and epic crunch without the heavy gluten density or blood sugar rollercoaster.

Ditching the Deep Fryer for Cellular Health

Traditional deep-frying plunges fresh vegetables into massive vats of highly refined industrial seed oils (like canola, soybean, or vegetable oil). These oils are incredibly high in omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs), which are highly unstable. When subjected to intense heat, those delicate fats break down instantly in a process called lipid peroxidation. This chemical breakdown creates inflammatory compounds like advanced glycation end-products (AGEs) and free radicals that damage your vascular walls and cause cellular stress from the inside out.

By opting for high-heat baking or an air fryer combined with a light mist of avocado oil, we totally bypass that inflammatory damage. Avocado oil is a monounsaturated fat that stays remarkably stable even up to 520°F, protecting the fat's integrity completely. Convective air cooking uses high-velocity heat to dry and crisp that Panko shell instantly, giving you that authentic, craveable deep-fried crunch while fully respecting and protecting your vibrant health. Eat good, feel amazing!

A Note on Our Partnership: Please keep in mind that my role is that of a Holistic Nutrition Consultant, focusing on the foundational pillars of health. Because I am not a doctor, I do not prescribe medication or provide medical diagnoses. Our sessions are designed to empower you with nutritional education; please continue to work closely with your physician regarding any specific medical concerns or conditions.