

Veggie Fries Add Crunch

Your friends and family will love this adventurous variation on "boring" vegetables. Whether the familiar — such as potatoes, onions or zucchini — or the exotic — like chayote squash, jicama or Jerusalem artichokes — fried veggies with a crunchy coating and tender center have an almost universal appeal.

This recipe makes a great side dish or snack and is a fun way to serve some vegetables you may have seen but never tried. And fear not! People everywhere are learning that foods fried *correctly* don't absorb much oil and can be included as part of a balanced diet. So we say fry it, you'll like it!

Vegetable Preparation:

Spanish Onions — Peel a large Spanish onion and cut into 1/2 inch slices. Break apart into rings.

Green, Red and Yellow Peppers — (The different colors look great coming through the batter.) Use small to medium-sized peppers. Rinse and cut in half lengthwise. Remove the seeds and top. Cut the halves in 3 to 4 pieces lengthwise, depending on size of the pepper.

Zucchini — Peel and cut into 1/4 inch thick slices.

Carrots — Peel and cut into 1/4 inch thick slices.

Jerusalem Artichokes — (Not really an artichoke, but a cousin of the sunflower, also referred to as sunchokes.) Peel and rinse. Pat dry with a paper towel. Cut into 1/4 inch round slices.

Chayote Squash — Peel and rinse. Pat dry with a paper towel. Cut in half and then slice in 1/4 inch strips.

Baby Corn — Fresh or canned. Rinse or drain and pat dry with a paper towel.

Hearts of Palm — Drain and pat dry with a paper towel. Cut in half.

Artichoke Hearts (canned in brine, not marinated) — Drain and pat dry with a paper towel. Cut in half and hold for use.

Button Mushrooms — Rinse and pat dry with a paper towel.

Jicama — Peel and cut into 1/4 inch thick slices, approximately 4 inches by 2 inches in size.

Batter:
 2 cups all-purpose flour
 2 teaspoons cornstarch
 1 teaspoon white pepper
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 1 1/4 cups beer (add a little more if necessary to thin batter)
 2 tablespoons Wesson Vegetable Oil
 2 eggs

1. Sift the flour, cornstarch, white pepper, salt and garlic powder into a mixing bowl. Using a fork, combine dry ingredients.

2. Separate the egg yolks from the egg whites. Place the egg whites in a stainless steel bowl, cover and refrigerate for use later in the recipe.

3. Beat the egg yolks and the Wesson Vegetable Oil together. Add the egg yolk/oil mixture and the beer to the dry ingredients. Using a wire whip, blend the ingredients, but don't overmix. Batter will remain a little lumpy. Place the batter in the refrigerator for at least one hour.

4. Just before you are ready to fry your vegetables, beat the egg whites with a wire whip until they form a peak. Fold the beaten egg whites into the batter. You are now ready to fry!

Clever Tip: Since you're the chef du jour, perhaps you will choose to add some seasonings to your batter that you particularly enjoy. Here's a couple that we* toss in when the mood strikes us: curry (for an Indian flair) or basil and oregano (that's Italian!).

Cooking Directions:

1. Make the vegetable batter as described above.

2. Heat 4 cups Wesson Vegetable Oil to 350 degrees in a wok or fryer.

3. Prepare each vegetable you want to fry according to the directions above. Dip each prepped vegetable piece in the batter and carefully place in the hot oil. Cook until golden brown. If necessary, turn the vegetable pieces while cooking to brown evenly.

4. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain the vegetables on a rack and/or paper towels. If you have a lot of vegetables to prepare, hold the fried vegetables on an appropriate plate, covered with paper towels, in a 175 degree oven.

5. In the center of a large serving platter, place a small bowl of your favorite dipping sauce to accompany the vegetables. If nothing else comes to mind, go with the perfect standby: ranch dressing. Arrange your veggies around the dipping sauce and ENJOY!



You Ask ? ? ? You Answer ? ? ?

In response to readers' questions, this column is for readers who have questions but don't know who to ask for the answers. In the past, many readers sent non-cooking requests to Cook's Question Corner, a cooking column on page B 8.

"You Ask — You Answer" is for non-cooking questions. The concept is the same: When a reader sends in a question, it will be printed in the paper. Readers who know the answer are asked to respond by mailing the answer, which will then be printed in the paper.

Questions and answers to this column should be addressed to You Ask — You Answer, Lou Ann Good, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.

QUESTION — A. Nolŧ of New Holland would like to know the words to the complete poem that was recited in the 1920s when her father-in-law went to school. The poem contains these lines: The carpenter's house is falling down. The preacher's kids are the worse in town.... Since this request appeared, Theresa Litecky, Eastampton, N.J., and several others have written to say they remember parts of this poem and can hardly wait to see the complete poem. Any readers who remember the complete poem, please send it immediately.

QUESTION — Marie Lorah, Box 299 R.D. 3, Tamaqua, Pa. 18252, is looking for water glasses with pictures of owls on them.

QUESTION — Romaine B. Answell, Sumerdale, would like to know who manufactured the Webalco electric skillet.

QUESTION — Robin O'Brien, Reading, would like to know some economical cleaning solutions to be used on everything from cleaning wooden floors to fiberglass tubs.

QUESTION — A reader would like to know how to keep bees away when holding outdoor picnics.

QUESTION — Barbara Davis, Sewell, N.J., would like to know where to purchase the old Parker Brothers card game called "Touring."

ANSWER — Nancy Kring, Johnstown, wanted to know where to purchase Pennsylvania Dutch signs, cookbooks, and memorabilia. Thanks to Karen Kinnaine, who writes that these items are available at Shartlesville General Store, P.O. Box 212, Shartlesville, PA 19554.



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