



Bacon & cheese veggie burger

Battered & fried rounds of eggplant are standard fare in Spain. This recipe is a slightly different take: the eggplant is dredged in garbanzo flour, fried in a little olive oil, and served on a bun with bacon, cheese and a splash of **salsa brava**.

Any type of flour will do, but the garbanzo flour gives it a lovely flavorful crunch.

It's tasty, inexpensive & simple enough to make. Serve as a main dish, or make smaller portions to pass around as tapas. Either way, it's guaranteed to be a hit.

Ingredients

1 medium sized eggplant, skin on, cut in 1/2" rounds

Garbanzo flour (aka gram or chickpea flour)

Coarse salt

3 tablespoons of good olive oil (more as needed)

Cheese (cheddar), bacon (fried), **salsa brava**

Burger buns, English muffins, or similar - toasted.

Preparation

Sprinkle the eggplant rounds generously with coarse salt. Let sit for 15-20 minutes, then brush off excess salt.

Add oil to a frying pan on medium high. Heat until the oil shimmers. Should be quite hot!

Dredge the eggplant in the flour and fry until crispy (1-2 minutes/side), set aside on a paper towel to blot off excess oil.

Return a round to the pan, top with cheese & bacon, cover on medium heat until the cheese melts a little.

Pop it on a toasted bun, top it off with a drizzle salsa brava and you're done.

Note:

1. The salt treatment before cooking helps get rid of excess moisture and makes the eggplant less bitter.
2. I prefer olive oil, but any good oil will do. Again, needs to be quite hot to get it crispy and minimize oil absorption.
3. Thick slices of green tomato in place of the eggplant will work just as well. Just sprinkle with salt & pepper, skip the salt treatment.
4. Top with whatever sauce/condiment you prefer: alioli, mayonaise, ketchup, salsa, soy sauce, kimchi or even a slice of tomato.

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