



Onion Bhajis

There are so many different recipes for onion bhajis but I think this is the simplest and easiest, they turn out light and crispy every time. I have used this recipe hundreds of times and I always add potatoes to mine. In fact, I don't think I have ever made an onion bhaji with just onions. Bhajis are so popular and a real crowd pleaser. Serve them with a minty yoghurt or green chilli dip. Another option is to try the East meets West method – in two slices of buttered bread with believe it or not, tomato ketchup. All my three children love their Bhaji Butties. Onion bhajis are gluten free as the base ingredient is gram flour, which is made from chick peas. They are the perfect little starter for vegetarians, vegans and pescatarians, however be forewarned, they are highly addictive!

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES + 30 MINUTES FOR MIXTURE TO REST

COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES

MAKES 28 TO 30 MEDIUM SIZED BHAJIS

Ingredients

- 250g Gram Flour
- 2 medium sized onions —halved & thinly sliced
- 2 medium sized potatoes — thinly sliced
- 2 tsp coriander seed powder
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 2 tsp dried fenugreek leaves (optional)
- 1 tsp pomegranate seed powder
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp of fresh coriander — chopped
- Few drops of lemon juice
- 1 litre of oil (for frying)

Method

1. Sieve the flour into a large mixing bowl, add the salt, chilli powder, coriander powder, pomegranate seed powder, cumin and lemon juice.
2. Add 125 ml water to the gram flour, mix with a wooden spoon to make a batter. The consistency should be smooth and similar to double cream.
3. Add the chopped coriander, fenugreek leaves, potatoes and onion, mix well, making sure that all the potatoes and onions are covered in the batter. Cover and leave to stand for 30 mins.
4. Heat oil in a wok or deep frying pan, drop a teaspoon of batter into the hot oil and fry. You can fry 6 or 7 at a time, depending on how large your pan is.
5. Deep fry for 3 to 5 minutes or until golden brown — turning once or twice to ensure they brown and crisped up on all sides. Take out using a slotted spoon and metal sieve, give them a good shake and drain onto kitchen roll.

Parveen's Top Tip

To make light and crispy bhajis, the batter has to be quite thin. I have a little tongue twister I like to use. The thinner the batter, the better the bhaji' use it as a mantra because it really works. You can use other vegetables for bhajis, sometimes called Pakora. Try red peppers, cauliflower or just potatoes. Just thinly slice the vegetables, cover in the batter and deep fry.

TOP TIP FOR FRYING To make sure the oil is at the right temperature, drop in a piece of potato, if it floats to the top within 5 seconds it's the right temperature, if it stays at the bottom then the oil is too cold. And when frying, fry on high for 1 min, turn the temperature down and fry on medium for 3 mins and finish off on high for the last minute. This ensures that the bhajis are crispy on the outside and cooked in the middle.