

# Frank's Old New Orleans Stuffed Artichokes

*If you savor the flavor of artichokes, stuffed Italian style with lots of Romano and olive oil, but you avoid making them because you think it's too much work. . .you're gonna love this super-easy way to fix Frank's Old New Orleans Stuffed Artichokes. Regardless of how you've done 'em before ...you owe it to yourself to try this method!*

## Ingredients

**See Instructions, below.**

## Instructions

1. Trim off the stalk portion of the raw artichoke as close to the leaves as you can get (and trim it straight so that it sits nice and level).
2. Then with a very sharp knife--an electric knife is best!--cut off the top third of the artichoke so that the upper leaves are exposed.
3. Next, wash the artichoke thoroughly, inside and out, and rub the cut edges with a piece of fresh lemon to keep the leaves from turning brown.
4. Then, using a melon baller or small teaspoon, dig out the "choke," the prickly, fuzzy center of the artichoke. But remember, you just want to remove the center thistle (that's the purple part), not all the inside tender leaves.
5. Now, rinse the artichoke again, rub it once more with lemon , juice, and turn it upside down on a coupla paper towels to drain. Prepare all the artichokes you plan to fix this way and set them aside momentarily. Because at this point, you're ready to stuff!

## MAKING THE STUFFING MIX

For a half-dozen artichokes, you're going to need:

4 cups of seasoned breadcrumbs  
3 cups of imported Romano cheese  
1 Tbsp. Italian seasonings  
2 tsp. garlic powder 1 tsp. onion powder  
2 tsp. black pepper  
6 fillets of anchovies

1 quart Extra Virgin Olive Oil  
1 lemon, sliced thinly

Simply add all the dry ingredients together in a large bowl and mix them thoroughly with our hands until uniformly blended.

Now, working with one artichoke at a time, place them in the bowl of stuffing mix and begin heaping the mixture over the top of the leaves. Then, just like shuffling a deck of cards, run your thumb over the leaves and allow the stuffing to drop between them until the spaces are filled. The more you stuff the leaves, the larger the artichoke will become. Do all the artichokes this way.

Incidentally, the mixture above will stuff a half-dozen artichokes nicely. To do a dozen, just double the recipe.

Now, lay one thin slice of lemon and one anchovy fillet on each artichoke and place the artichokes into a steamer pot (or seafood boiling pot with a basket) so that they just touch each other --this keeps the outer leaves from falling off. Then add a few cups of water to the steamer, bring it to a slow boil, and place the lid on the pot. (For best results, set the heat to about medium-high).

Total cooking time is about an hour and fifteen minutes for medium artichokes to an hour and a half for large ones. But every 15 minutes, remove the lid carefully (WATCH THE STEAM!) and, in a thin stream, pour some of the olive oil over the top of the artichokes. Then replace the lid and continue cooking until a meat fork will pierce the artichoke through and through.

That's *Frank's New Orleans Stuffed Artichokes* and you can serve them hot or cold.

### Chef's Hints

1. Add extra cheese to the stuffing mix if you want a heavy cheese flavor in your artichokes. Most Italians mix their stuffing to taste. I recommend you use the mixture I gave you as a base, then add to it according to your tastes.
2. Don't be afraid to make more mix than you need. It freezes well in Zip-Loc bags and it's excellent as a coating for veal cutlets, pork chops, meatballs, chicken and seafood.
3. To serve the artichokes hot, cook them about three-quarters of the way in the steamer, then transfer them to a baking pan, along with about a cup and a half of the steaming liquid. Then sprinkle a little extra Romano cheese over each artichoke, cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil, and bake in your oven at 325 degrees for 30 minutes.
4. Don't just stuff a few artichokes! Stuff about a dozen of 'em when you make them. Then after they cool to room temperature, wrap them in several layers of plastic wrap (Saran) and stash them away in your freezer! They'll keep well for up to three months.

Note: I stuff my artichokes "raw" as opposed to par-boiling them. I find that par-boiling causes you to lose the rich robust artichoke flavor and makes stuffing a real chore. Artichokes steamed raw with the stuffing inside locks in the flavor! Try it!

