

GRILLED STUFFED ARTICHOKEs

One can only eat so much salad, so in the summer, I love to stuff and grill artichokes as a nice side dish alternative. It takes a little bit of prep, but it's well worth your time. It's great served with a nice dip like tzatziki or even some ranch dressing.

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

2 artichokes

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup gorgonzola cheese, crumbled

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup panko

3 tablespoons olive oil, plus some for brushing

salt and pepper

tzatziki or ranch dressing (optional)

PREPARATION

I like to trim the sharp points off of each of the artichoke leaves before I begin. It's optional, but this way no one will get pricked from the leaves. Just cut $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch from the bottom of each tip.

In a pot large enough to hold the artichokes, bring an inch of salted water up to a boil. Gently place the artichokes in and lower the heat to simmer. Cover pot and steam for 45 minutes.

Drain out the water and using tongs, gently place the artichokes on a cutting board. Allow them to cool for about ten minutes.

Cut the artichoke in half, lengthwise. Gently scoop out the fibrous elements in the middle being careful to leave the heart and most of the leaves in tact. It's okay if some of the

center leaves get dislodged in the process. Just discard them.

In a small bowl, combine the cheese, panko, and olive oil. Mix with a small whisk and set aside. Brush the artichokes with olive oil on both sides. Season them with salt and pepper to taste.

Oil the grill grates. Heat the grill to medium-high. Place the artichoke halves cut side down on the grates and grill until you get grill marks, about two to three minutes.

Gently remove artichokes with tongs or a spatula and place on a cutting board, cut side up. Spoon the cheese/panko mixture into the center of each artichoke.

Gently place back on the grill, cut side up, to allow the cheese to melt—about 2-3 minutes.

Serve with tzatziki or ranch dressing on the side.