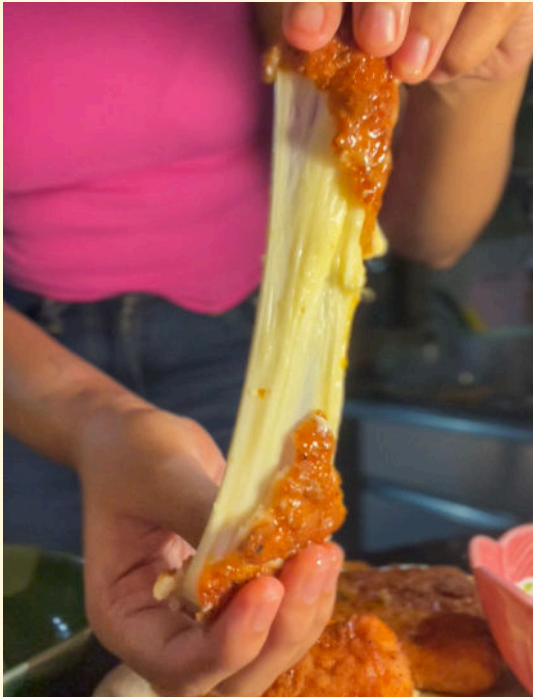


CHILI'S HOT HONEY MOZZARELLA STICKS

by shivangi pithisaria



Cheesy, spicy, saucy and so crispy: these Chili's inspired hot honey mozzarella sticks with homemade ranch are literally everything. The double coating makes them extra crunchy and that cheese pull? Absolutely unreal.

Servings: 6

Prep Time: 10 min

Freeze Time: 1 hr

Cook Time: 10 min

Ingredients:

Cheese

- 200g mozzarella cheese block, cut into 6 slices

Dry Coating

- 1/4 cup cornstarch

Wet Flour Coating

- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- salt, to taste
- 1/3 cup water, adjust

Seasoned Breadcrumbs Coating

- 1/2 cup fine breadcrumbs
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- salt, to taste
- 1/2 tsp black pepper

Oil

- neutral oil, for frying

Hot Honey Glaze

- 1/4 cup hot honey
- 1/4 cup hot sauce (any red chilli sauce would work)
- 2 tbsp oil (taken from the frying pan)

Dip: Ranch

- 1 tbsp hung curd (or greek yogurt or sour cream)
- 1 tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tsp garlic, minced
- juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1/2 tbsp coriander, finely chopped
- 1 tsp dill, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp milk or water, to adjust consistency
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp onion powder
- salt, to taste
- 1/4 tsp pepper

Directions:

- Prepare the cheese sticks: Take a 200g mozzarella block and cut it into 6 equal rectangle pieces. Each piece should be thick enough to give a good cheese pull but not so thick that the cheese doesn't melt properly. If the slices are too thin, the breading might even overpower the cheese and the cheese could into the coating instead of staying gooey inside, which is something you do not want!
- Prepare the dry and wet coatings: You'll need three bowls-
 - Bowl 1 : Cornstarch (to lightly coat the cheese and dry it out).
 - Bowl 2 : A wet slurry made with cornstarch, all purpose flour, salt and water. This helps the breadcrumbs stick to the cheese.
 - Bowl 3 : Breadcrumbs mixed with seasonings- salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, oregano and chilli powder.
- Coat the cheese (Double Coating for Extra Crispiness):
 - Dip each cheese stick into cornstarch, coating it well and dusting off the excess.
 - Dip it into the cornstarch slurry.
 - Coat it with the breadcrumb mixture, pressing gently so the crumbs stick properly.
 - Repeat the process: Dip it back into the cornstarch slurry and then coat with breadcrumbs again. This double coating prevents the cheese from oozing out while frying and gives the crispiest crunchy crust.
- Freeze the coated cheese sticks: Place them on a parchment lined tray and freeze for at least an hour. Skipping this step can cause the cheese to burst while frying.
- Fry the mozzarella sticks: Heat oil over medium heat. If the oil is too hot, the coating will brown too quickly before the cheese melts and if it's too cold, the cheese sticks will absorb excess oil. I like to fry 2 at a time until golden and crisp and then drain on paper towels.
- Make the hot honey sauce: Mix hot sauce and hot honey with a little oil from the frying pan. Toss the hot mozzarella sticks in this sauce while they're still hot to coat them evenly.
- Serve with ranch: Mix hung curd, mayo, oregano, coriander, dill, salt, pepper, onion powder and pressed garlic in a bowl with a whisk or a fork for a quick homemade ranch. Serve immediately while the cheese is hot and stretchy!