



TO VEGETABLES
with love

Panelle-slash-panisse (Sicilian/Provencal chickpea fritters)

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Makes 10-12 long, thick fries or many many square ‘croutons’

extra virgin olive oil

500ml (2 cups) vegetable stock or water

110g (about 1 cup) chickpea flour

sea salt and black pepper

lemon wedges, to serve

Drizzle a loaf pan (mine is 20cm / 8-inch x 10 cm / 4-inch) with a little olive oil and use your hands to smear it across the base and sides. Set aside.

In a medium pot, add the vegetable stock or water and bring to a boil.

Place the chickpea flour, 1/2 teaspoon of salt and a big pinch of black pepper in a bowl and whisk to combine. When the stock or water boils, slowly pour it into the bowl with the chickpea flour, whisking constantly to prevent lumps. Now pour the chickpea flour mixture back into the pot you used to heat the stock/water and place on medium high heat. Whisking constantly, bring it to a gentle boil, reduce heat to medium-low and then continue whisking until it is thick and smooth. Add 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, and whisk until incorporated.

Scrape the thick chickpea batter into the loaf pan, pushing it into the sides, smoothing the top as much as you can (a wet offset spatula helps). Allow to cool for 10 minutes and then cover and place in the fridge until completely cold and firm, about 60 minutes. You can also leave it to chill overnight.

After chilling, turn the slab of chickpea batter onto a cutting board and slice into 1/2-inch / 1.25cm strips (to resemble thick French fries) or rectangles/squares (or whatever shape you like).

Place a 1/4-inch / 6-7mm of olive oil to a skillet or deep pan (for many years, [this](#) has been my choice for frying in small quantities). Test that the oil is ready by inserting a wooden chopstick or spoon and if it sizzles immediately, it is ready. If there is any surface moisture on the chickpea strips, blot with kitchen towel. Working in batches, carefully drop them into the hot oil and fry, rotating them occasionally, until they are golden all over, about 5-6 minutes. If you would like them crispier with a thicker fried skin, you can fry them again, after they cool.

Transfer them to kitchen paper lined plate to drain and immediately sprinkle with a little sea salt. Serve hot, with lemon wedges.