

U The Lexingtonienne U

NON-YUCKY BRUSSELS SPROUTS

- Fresh brussels sprouts
- 5-6 cloves of garlic, peeled and lightly crushed
- Olive oil
- Butter (don't tell anybody, but have about half a stick ready)
- Italian seasoned breadcrumbs (panko crumbs are also really fantastic for this if you have some -- you can buy them Italian seasoned or just add your own Italian herb seasoning)
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Parmesan cheese -- grated or shredded (whatever you have) -- to taste

Cut the stumpy nubs (I'm pretty sure that's the culinary term) off the brussels sprouts and peel off the outer layer of leaves. Slice your sprouts in half, or into quarters if they are extra big. Rinse and drain. Get them pretty dry because excess water will cause popping when the brussels sprouts hit the hot oil, which can burn you.

Meanwhile, coat a saute pan or skillet with olive oil, add several lightly smashed cloves of garlic, and warm over the lowest possible heat for about 10 minutes or until your entire house smells like garlic. You now have garlic-infused olive oil. You can do this step in advance, then turn off the heat and just let the oil and garlic sit there until you are ready. It's fine if the garlic browns, but don't let it burn. It gets bitter, and you are what you eat.

Fish out most of the garlic cloves -- maybe leaving one or two of the largest cloves in the pan -- then turn your heat up to high. When the pan is hot, add about a tablespoon of butter, let it melt, then add your brussels sprouts. Salt & pepper to your liking. Don't be afraid to let the brussies sit in the pan for a couple of minutes before you stir them around. You want them to brown up and caramelize a bit. Brussels sprouts are naturally a bit bitter, and this caramelization takes some of that off. Stir, adding more butter or oil as your pan gets dry, and allow the sprouts to get nice and brown. It's okay if some of the looser leaves burn a little -- this makes the dish crispy and extra delicious!

When the sprouts look nice and brown, push them to the sides of the pan, creating a hole in the middle. Throw another pat of butter into that, let it melt, and pour some bread crumbs over top. Use your stirring spoon or spatula to mix the bread crumbs into the melted butter, allowing the bread crumbs to toast a little bit. Then stir in thoroughly with your sprouts. You can repeat this step if you want more bread crumbs. Remove from heat, then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

