

Notes:

- The onions should be as clear and blemish free as possible.
- If you don't enjoy beer in any form whatsoever, go ahead and replace the beer in the recipe for the batter with an equal amount of cold 2% or whole milk.
- We recommend using Great Lakes Brewing Edmund Fitzgerald or Guinness Draught in the beer batter, although just about anything will work.
- Just about any seasoned salt will work well in this batter. We recommend Alden Mill House Miracle Blend, available from aldenmillhouse.com or the mill and store in Alden, Michigan.
- This simple beer batter can be used with a number of different vegetables for deep frying, such as broccoli, cauliflower, mushrooms, and many others.

Onion Rings with Beer Batter



Onion rings are a staple in restaurants all over the state of Michigan and elsewhere. This classic recipe produces onion rings similar to those found in bars, which many people try to duplicate. In this version of this recipe, we also add the following recipe for a sauce to dip the onion rings into. This sauce starts out slightly sweet, and then, thanks to a wonderfully-rich hot sauce from Aerosmith guitarist Joe Perry, there's just a bit of a powerful "kick" ...

**Ingredients**

2 large white Michigan onions
 1 large egg
 1 cup beer
 1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
 1 tablespoon seasoned salt

Equipment

Large mixing bowl
 Whisk
 Deep fryer filled with vegetable oil

Peel the onions, then slice them into nice thick slices 1/2" to 1" thick. Separate the slices into individual rings. (Set the smaller inner rings and cores aside for use in the dipping sauce recipe, described next.) Refrigerate the rings until they're chilled.

Make the dipping sauce described next while the rings are chilling.

To make the batter, crack the egg into the large mixing bowl, and whisk it till it's smooth. Add the beer to the egg, continuing whisking until well-mixed. While still whisking, slowly add the flour and seasoned salt. Continue whisking until the batter is smooth.

Preheat a deep fryer filled with vegetable oil to 375 degrees F. Once the oil is hot, drop between four and eight of the chilled onion slices into the batter. (See "Using Home Deep Fryers For Onion Rings" on the following page.) Use your hand to toss the rings in the batter, making sure they're completely coated. *Without draining excess batter from the rings*, individually drop each ring into the hot oil in the deep fryer. Use a pair of tongs to keep the rings separated and moving in the oil, turning them over a couple times. Cook the battered rings until the batter is golden brown and the onions are still slightly crisp (this should only take a couple minutes).

Serve with the dipping sauce described on the next page.

Rockin' Dipping Sauce

Ingredients

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1 medium white onion (or some of the inner rings and chunks left over from onion ring slices in recipe the previous recipe)
 2 stalks celery
 1 tablespoon minced garlic
 2 14-1/2 ounce cans whole tomatoes
 1 6 ounce can tomato paste
 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
 1/2 cup Joe Perry's Rock Your World™ Boneyard Brew Hot Sauce
 2 cups mayonnaise

Equipment

Colander
 Cutting board
 12" to 14" skillet
 Food processor

Chop the onion rather coarsely to get one cup. Clean the celery stalks and slice them to be about the same size as the chopped onion.

Melt the butter in the bottom of the skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, celery and garlic to the melted butter in the skillet and sauté the vegetables and garlic until the onion is slightly translucent. Temporarily remove the skillet from the heat. Dump the tomatoes from the cans into the colander in a sink and let them drain. Toss them a few times to ensure the majority of the juice is gone. Transfer the tomatoes to the cutting board and chop them rather coarsely. Except for the mayonnaise, stir the rest of the ingredients in with the onion and celery in the skillet and set it over low heat. Simmer uncovered for 30 minutes, stirring almost constantly to prevent scorching. (As this sauce makes fumes when making it, please simmer this sauce and clean up the pot in a well-ventilated area!) Let the sauce cool for a few minutes.

Dump the mayonnaise and the simmered sauce into a food processor and purée until smooth, stopping the food processor and scraping it down with a rubber spatula once or twice.

Chill before serving with the onion rings from the previous recipe.

Using Home Deep Fryers For Onion Rings

This onion ring recipe calls for using large onions for the rings themselves. With larger onions, the flavor is more-fully developed, making the end result taste better than if you were to use smaller onions. However, because of the smaller size of most deep fryers intended for home use, you'll only be able to comfortably cook anywhere from four to eight rings at a time. The rings will float on the surface of the oil. Cooking too many at once will cause the uppermost rings to lie on the ones underneath, causing the uppermost rings not to cook. They'll also stick together, making for uneven cooking where they touch. It's best to cook only a single layer at a time. Since these rings only take a couple minutes to cook, your diners shouldn't be too unhappy with this timing.

If you don't have a deep fryer, you can use the same large skillet used for the sauce. If you do, make sure you have a thermometer that can monitor the temperature of the oil.

More Notes:

- No, Joe Perry isn't from Michigan and neither is his hot sauce. However, the uniquely rich flavor of his Boneyard Brew hot sauce reflects his European heritage, and the love of hot sauces he learned from his Italian grandfather, echoing Michigan's own Italian communities and the flavors they, too, have developed.
- Joe Perry's Rock Your World™ Boneyard Brew Hot Sauce is available at jerky and hot sauce shops around the state, or can be purchased from its online site, <http://boneyardbrew.com>.
- Like your dipping sauce a bit more on the sweet side? Try using Joe Perry's Rock Your World™ Mango Peach Tango Sauce in place of his Boneyard Brew Hot Sauce. Joe's Mango Peach Tango sauce is available on the web site listed above.