

# Frico (Parmesan Cheese Crisps) and Balsamic Reduction Method

**Frico** are crispy cheese rounds that can be made in a non-stick pan or in the oven as directed below. For stove top cooking, use the same method, cooking over medium heat. You can choose to make them larger or smaller. I like to drape them over a heat proof cup or bowl as they harden to make a bowl shape to fill with salad or appetizer components. Small frico can be set into a mini muffin pan to cool to make tiny appetizer sized cups. The goal is to create a texture that's lacy but that still holds together, so be sure to sprinkle the cheese lightly. Serve as an appetizer as a salad garnish. *Yield 8 crisps.*

The Balsamic Reduction Method is a simple way to concentrate the color and flavor of balsamic vinegar for use on tomato salads, meats or even sparingly on fresh fruit.

## Frico

1 cup thinly shredded or grated (not grated to a powder) Parmigiano-Reggiano (you can also try Asiago, aged Cheddar, aged Gouda, Manchego, or another hard cheese)

Optional: 1/2 tsp. slightly crushed cumin seed, fennel seed or dried Italian seasoning

*Serves 8*

1. Heat the oven to 375°F. Cover two large baking sheets with parchment paper or a silpat silicone sheet. Combine the cheese and spice.
2. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of the mixture to form a 4 to 4 ½ inch round. Spread the cheese evenly with a fork. Repeat with the rest of the mixture, leaving 2 inches between each.
3. Bake each sheet (one at a time) until the crisps just begin to color, 6 to 8 minutes. Don't let crisps fully brown or the frico will become bitter. Use a spatula to lift the edges of the crisps and loosen them from the pan.
4. Remove the crisps and immediately lay them over a rolling pin or the side of a bottle to give them a curved shape. For a flat frico, just transfer to paper towels. When cooled, store the crisps in an airtight container for up to two days

## Balsamic Reduction

(use a good quality, but not wildly expensive balsamic vinegar)

Place 2 cups of vinegar in a small non-reactive sauce pan and cook on medium high heat until reduced by half or up to two thirds. **Note:** Use your exhaust hood or alternate ventilation as this creates a strong smell. Also, the vinegar does not look as though it is thickening, so test it periodically by drizzling a small amount on a plate to judge the desired consistency. Cool and store in a squeeze bottle for use on salads, roasts and even desserts.

**“Drawn to the Kitchen” with Chef  
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