

## BACON, LEEK, AND ONION CASSEROLE



SERVES 4

**T**his layered, all-in-one brunch casserole is great for when you're serving four or more people because it can be prepped before your guests arrive. It's an old-time casserole with the added flavor of leeks and some delicious homemade fried onion straws on top.

### *For the onion straws*

1 onion, very thinly sliced into rings  
3 tablespoons salt  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
1 teaspoon paprika  
¼ teaspoon garlic powder  
4 cups vegetable oil

### *For the casserole*

1 pound bacon, cut into 2-inch pieces  
2 leeks (white and pale green parts), trimmed, chopped, and washed very well  
12 extra-large eggs  
1 cup milk  
1 tablespoon kosher salt  
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
3 cups grated Gruyère cheese (12 ounces)  
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

1. Make the onion straws: Gently separate the onion rings in a colander and sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of the salt. Let sit for 30 minutes to extract the water.
2. Combine the flour, the remaining 1 tablespoon salt, pepper, paprika, and garlic powder in a small bowl; set aside.
3. Heat the vegetable oil in a 4-quart saucepan over medium-high heat until the temperature reaches 365°F on a food thermometer.
4. Toss half the onion slices in the flour, shaking off any excess before carefully placing them in the hot oil. As they cook, turn them carefully with a spider or tongs until light golden brown. Remove the onion straws to a paper towel-lined plate. Do the same with the remaining onion slices. Make sure not to flour the slices until just before frying or they will get gooeey.
5. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Lightly butter a 2-quart casserole dish.

6. Make the casserole: Cook the bacon in a skillet over medium heat until crispy. Remove the bacon and drain it on paper towels. Drain off all but 2 tablespoons of the bacon fat from the pan. Sauté the leeks in the bacon fat for 4 or 5 minutes, until soft.
7. Using a whisk or a fork, beat the eggs, milk, salt, and pepper in a large bowl until frothy.
8. Spread the leeks in an even layer in the prepared casserole. Top with 1 cup of the Gruyère cheese, then the bacon, then another cup of the cheese, and then the egg mixture. Sprinkle the top with the remaining 1 cup Gruyère cheese. Arrange the onion straws on top.
9. Bake the casserole for 40 minutes, or until the eggs are firm in the center. Remove the casserole from the oven and sprinkle the top with the parsley. Allow to stand for 10 minutes before serving.