



Édamamé Korokké (Green Soybean Croquette Patties)

Japanese food halls known as *depachika* located in the basement level of Japan's leading department stores carry an incredible array of fresh foods, packaged grocery items, and prepared take-out items. Among the savory items at *osōzai* counters, what the Japanese call *korokké* is a bestseller.

In the summertime, crispy-on-the-outside and creamy-on-the-inside *édamamé korokké* (Green Soybean Croquette Patties) are both a lunchbox and dinnertime favorite.

Makes 4-6 patties.

8 ounces (225 grams) potato, peeled cut in cubes and boiled
 1/8 teaspoon salt + freshly ground pepper
 6 ounces (about 170 grams) cooked and shelled *édamamé* fresh green soybeans
 1 tablespoon cornstarch
 1 small egg, beaten
 1 cup *panko* breadcrumbs
 Vegetable oil, for deep-frying



Boil the potatoes for 5 minutes or until tender (a toothpick meets no resistance). Drain and mash coarsely with a potato-masher or fork. Fold in the green soybeans, distributing them evenly throughout the mashed potato mixture. Season with the salt and pepper. Divide the mass into 4 or 6 portions.



With hands dusted in cornstarch, form each portion into a patty shape. Have 2 containers ready, one for breadcrumbs the other for beaten egg. Have a paper towel-lined plate or tray nearby on which to place breaded croquette patties.

Designate one hand to do the “wet” work (dipping in egg) and one hand to do the “dry” work (rolling in breadcrumbs) to avoid unnecessary washing of your hands. One at a time, dip the cornstarch-dusted croquette patties in egg, then roll in breadcrumbs to coat.

Place the croquette patties on the paper towel-lined tray. This can be done up to 8 hours before frying. Cover and refrigerate if you want to hold for more than 30 minutes.



Fry the croquette patties.

Fill a small, deep skillet with 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) of oil. Heat the oil slowly. Stir a few times to be sure temperatures remain even throughout. Most Japanese home cooks (and professional chefs) check oil temperature using unvarnished wooden chopsticks. When small air bubbles form around the tips the oil is ready to test with a sample of egg-coated crumbs. Add a few crumbs to the oil. They should sink immediately, rise slowly and begin to sizzle slightly on the surface. Within 5 seconds they should start to color ever so lightly.

If your sample never sinks and begins to sizzle and color on the surface right away, the oil temperature is too high: stir the oil and reduce the heat slightly.

If your sample sinks and takes more than 7 or 8 seconds to rise to the surface, the oil temperature is too low. Increase your heat source slightly, stir, and wait a minute before testing again.

When the oil temperature is right (about 325°F or 180C), gently slip the croquette patties into the oil, one at a time, in batches to avoid crowding. Allow them to fry undisturbed for 1 and 1/2 minutes. (Patience... poking and excessive turning will cause them to fall apart.)

Flip them and fry for another 45 seconds or until golden on all surfaces. With a fine-meshed skimmer, remove the croquette patties to a paper towel-lined rack to drain. Fry the remaining patties in batches using the skimmer to remove bits of breadcrumb from the oil between batches.

Serve hot or let cool to room temperature.

