

Black Bean, Spinach & Smoked Gooda Cheeze Quesadillas

Swick

Serves 4 | Active Time: 40 minutes | Total Time: 50 minutes

Step 1: Preparing the Mango Salsa

- 1/4 cup roughly chopped cilantro
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh lime juice, or to taste
- 1/8 tsp sea salt
- 1/8 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp agave nectar
- 3/4 cup diced mango
- 1/3 cup finely diced red onion
- 1/2 jalapeño, minced (or to taste)

To prepare the salsa, simply add all of the ingredients to a bowl and gently fold everything together. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes — this step is not critical, but it does give the flavors a bit more time to come together.

Step 2: Cooking the Onions

- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 1/4 tsp sea salt

To cook the onions, heat a frypan over medium-high heat and then add the onions and salt. Dry-sauté the onions for 10 minutes to 15, or until translucent and golden brown. If desired, use a tablespoon of oil, when frying the onions.

Once done, set aside.

Step 3: Making the Cheeze Sauce

- 1/2 cup roasted cashew nuts
- 1/4 cup nutritional yeast
- 1/4 tsp onion powder
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tbsp flour
- 1 tbsp light miso paste
- 1/4 cup beer*
- 1/2 cup plain, unsweetened non-dairy milk
- 2 cups finely chopped baby spinach (approx. 5 oz)
- sea salt, to taste

To make the cheeze sauce, using a high-speed blender, blend together the roasted cashews, nutritional yeast, onion and garlic powder, flour, miso paste, beer, and non-dairy milk until you reach a nice smooth consistency.

Alternatively, if you do not have a high-speed blender, process the cashew nuts and nutritional yeast until you reach a paste-like consistency, then add the remaining ingredients and blend until smooth. Note that this method will not produce as smooth of a consistency.

*For the beer, just use something that you really like. The one we use is Newcastle Brown Ale and we think it's delicious in this sauce.

At this point, place the cheeze sauce into a medium pot and add the chopped spinach. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer over medium heat, stirring continuously for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the sauce has heated through and the spinach has fully wilted.

Lastly, taste for seasoning. If desired, add a pinch or two of cayenne pepper and/or a dash or two of tabasco sauce — we often add both, but ultimately it depends on what you are using the cheeze sauce for, and your personal preference.

Step 4: Assembling & Cooking the Quesadillas

- 1 1/2 cups (1 - 15 oz can) cooked black beans
- 4 - 8" inch whole wheat tortillas
- Fresh Mango Salsa (from above)
- Cashew Sour Cream (optional)

To assemble the quesadillas, spread a quarter of the cheese/spinach mixture onto a tortilla shell — leaving a 1" border around the edge so that the mixture does not leak out during cooking. Note: the mixture will likely appear quite runny, surprisingly, however, it does hold together quite well, even after cutting the final quesadilla.

Next, place a quarter of the onions and black beans onto one half of the tortilla shell. Fold the tortilla in half and set aside while you assemble the remaining quesadillas.

Alternatively, the quesadillas can be fully assembled while they are in the frying pan. This just avoids having to transfer them once they are assembled. In this case, it's easier to assemble and cook them one at a time.

To cook the quesadillas, heat a large frypan over medium-high heat. Once hot, spray with some non-stick spray and carefully transfer two quesadillas to the frying pan. Cook on the first side until golden brown, about 3 or 4 minutes and then flip and let cook for a minute or two on the other side. Remove and let cool for a minute or two before cutting. Continue with the remaining quesadillas.

Lastly, cut each quesadilla in half and serve with some of the mango chutney and a dollop of Cashew Sour Cream. Note, since the quesadilla itself is quite creamy, the sour cream is not really necessary, it just looks nice. The mango chutney, however, is highly recommended as it pairs extremely well with the rich and creamy quesadilla.