

GRILLED CHEESE

FOR NATIONAL GRILLED CHEESE DAY

A NOTE FROM CHEF AMELIA:

Few things in life are better and more comforting than a perfect grilled cheese. They're adaptable, affordable, and make a quick meal for a family when paired with some tomato soup!

For this recipe, I've used freshly baked sourdough bread, but any high quality, 'rustic' loaf bread will work. Look around in the bakery section of your local grocery store and pick whatever looks and sounds good for you and your family. Cheese selections are also good ways to experiment with flavor! I try and use at least one cheese that has great melting capacity--try muenster, gouda, swiss, and provolone. Smoked cheeses will add a touch of flavor, and a sprinkle of parmesan can help give you a little extra saltiness. I also am a grilled cheese purist and always include a slice of good ol' American cheese. You simply cannot ask for a better melting cheese!

There's a great debate about butter vs mayo for your bread spread. Both work beautifully, and you don't need to worry about your sandwich tasting like mayonnaise when it's done. It melts perfectly into the bread for a nice even browning. I recommend you try both and pick your favorite!

While there's nothing wrong with a basic, cheese-only sandwich, grilled cheeses are also great ways to use up leftovers. Got some pickled onions from taco night? Throw 'em on there with some pepper jack! Canned tuna? Throw it on there with some swiss for the classic diner staple, the tuna melt! One of my favorite iterations is roasted turkey breast, cheddar cheese, and sliced apple. The sweetness and crunch from the apples is an unexpected delight. Your only limit is your imagination!

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 slices sourdough bread
- 1 slice smoked gouda
- 1 slice American cheese
- 1 tablespoon caramelized onion
- 1 slice bacon, cooked and ripped in half
- 1 tablespoon butter, softened (salted or unsalted work!)
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of freshly ground black pepper
- *substitute mayonnaise for butter, personal preference



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Spread the butter [or mayo] on the sliced bread.
2. In a nonstick pan over medium heat, put one slice of bread butter side down in the pan.
3. Layer half a slice of each cheese on the bread.
4. Next, add the bacon and caramelized onions, and season with salt and pepper.
5. Add the remaining cheese on top of the bacon and onion, then place the second slice of bread butter side up.
6. Cover with a lid and let cook for 3 minutes.
7. Flip the sandwich and cook for another 3 minutes, with the lid helping to melt the cheese.
8. Remove from the pan and slice using a serrated bread knife.