



Healthy and Delicious Grilled Cheese

Grilled cheese is food that nearly all kids like, but made with white bread and processed “cheese” (which, in my book, doesn’t qualify as cheese at all!), it is notoriously unhealthy. Luckily, the simple change to a whole-grain bread and organic cheese fixes this and makes it a wonderful snack for your kids. Add some other goodies, such as roasted veggies or, as I do in this recipe, sautéed onions, some cilantro and a spicy tomato paste, and now we’re really talking healthy.

Note: the best way to tell a real whole-grained bread from one that’s falsely marketing itself as one is to look at the ingredients. The first ingredient listed should be whole wheat flour. If not, put it down and look at the next one. Also, you want to make sure there’s none of that nasty high-fructose corn syrup in there. Two brands I like are Matthew’s and the Vermont Bread Company.

1 tablespoon olive oil
½ red onion, sliced thin
2 slices whole-grain sliced bread
2 slices organic Vermont cheddar cheese, pre-sliced or cut into slices
½ tomato, cut in thin slices
a few fresh cilantro leaves
organic butter, just enough to lightly coat bread

1. Combine olive oil and red onion in a small skillet. Season with salt and sauté on medium heat for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.
2. Spread butter on one side of each slice of bread.
3. Put the cheese, tomatoes, onions and cilantro between the bread (the 2 buttered sides should face out and should not be touching the cheese).
4. Heat a skillet or grill. Place sandwich on the hot surface and cook one side until it’s golden brown. Then carefully flip with a spatula and cook the other side until it’s golden brown.
5. For the most fun eating, cut in half diagonally and watch the melty cheese ooze out.

To make a spicy paste to spread on the inside of the grilled cheese just before cooking, combine the following ingredients.

1 small can tomato paste
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
a few dried red pepper flakes
salt