

Better-Than-Cracker-Barrel Meatloaf with Ritz Crackers and Cheddar

Cheesy, Moist, and Glazed to Perfection - Just Like the Restaurant Classic



OVEN
350°F

TIME
30 min

TEMP
160°F

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

Meatloaf:

- 2 lbs lean ground beef
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely diced bell pepper (optional)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ sleeves Ritz crackers (about 48 crackers), crushed
- 4 oz shredded sharp cheddar or Colby cheese
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk

- 1 tsp salt
- ... tsp black pepper

Topping:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup ketchup
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp mustard

Ingredient Notes & Swaps:

Ground Beef: Lean beef (85/15 or 90/10) works best for tenderness without too much grease.

Cheese: Cheddar adds sharp flavor, but Colby gives a creamier finish.

Crackers: Ritz is key to mimicking that Cracker Barrel taste, but buttery round crackers or saltines can substitute.

Add-ins: Swap bell pepper for shredded carrots or omit entirely for a smoother texture.

How to Make Cracker Barrel Meatloaf:

Preheat the OvenSet your oven to 350°F (175°C).

Line a loaf pan or baking sheet with foil or parchment for easy cleanup.

Mix the ToppingIn a small bowl, mix together ketchup, brown sugar, and mustard. Set aside for later.

Make the Meat MixtureIn a large mixing bowl, combine eggs, milk, crushed crackers, cheese, onion, bell pepper (if using), salt, and pepper. Mix well.

Add the BeefGently fold in the ground beef until just combined-avoid overmixing to keep the texture tender.

Shape and BakeForm the mixture into a loaf shape and place in your prepared pan. Bake for 30 minutes uncovered.

Add the GlazeRemove from oven and spread the ketchup glaze evenly on top. Return to oven and bake for another 30-40 minutes, or until internal temp reaches 160°F (71°C).

Rest and ServeLet the meatloaf rest for 10-15 minutes before slicing. This keeps it juicy and easier to serve.

Tips for Success:

Let it rest before cutting-this helps the juices redistribute.

For cleaner slices, use a serrated knife.

Line your pan with foil for easy cleanup and to help remove the loaf easily.

Add a spoonful of glaze inside the loaf for extra flavor throughout.

Perfect Pairings:

Tomato Skillet with Okra and Sausage - bold and veggie-packed

Easy Turkey Wings - for a double comfort combo

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12. Perfect Pairings: This classic meatloaf begs for Southern-style sides. Here are some

ChefManiac-approved pairings:

13. Tomato : Skillet with Okra and Sausage - bold and veggie-packed
14. Easy : Turkey Wings - for a double comfort combo
15. Cajun : Chicken Sausage Gumbo - spicy and soulful
16. Sheet : Pan Quesadillas - a crispy, cheesy side idea
17. Mexican : Chicken and Rice Casserole - a flavorful twist to round out your plate
18. Storage & Leftover Tips: Store in the fridge for up to 4 days in an airtight container.
19. Freeze slices wrapped in foil and sealed in a freezer bag for up to 2 months.
20. Reheat in the oven at 325°F for 15-20 minutes or microwave individual slices for 1-2 minutes.
21. Leftover meatloaf makes amazing sandwiches with a swipe of mayo or extra glaze!
22. More Recipes You'll Love: Looking for more cozy main dishes and comfort sides?
23. Easy : Turkey Wings
24. Tomato : Skillet with Okra and Sausage
25. Mexican : Chicken and Rice Casserole

SWAPS & NOTES

& Swaps Ground Beef : Lean beef (85/15 or 90/10) works best for tenderness without too much grease.

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More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

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