

Crispy Jalapeño Cheese Bites: Perfect Fried Appetizer

incredible textural contrast



OVEN
350°F

TIME
5 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups pepper jack cheese, shredded
- 2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- 2 jalapeños, seeds removed, finely diced, and sautéed until soft
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1½ cups Panko breadcrumbs
- 2 teaspoons Slap Ya Mama seasoning (or similar Cajun seasoning blend)
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1-2 cups vegetable oil (for frying, such as canola, peanut, or corn oil)

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's get these delicious : Jalapeño Cheese Bites crispy!
2. Prepare : Sautéed Jalapeños: First, finely dice your 2 jalapeños after removing seeds (and membranes for less heat). In a small skillet, heat a teaspoon of oil over medium heat. Add the diced jalapeños and sauté for 3-5 minutes until they are softened. Let them cool completely.
3. Prepare : Dredging Station: Set up three shallow containers (pie plates or wide bowls) in an assembly line fashion: First container: Place the 1 cup all-purpose flour.
4. Second container: Whisk together the 2 large eggs and 1 cup buttermilk until well combined.
5. Third container: Mix the 1½ cups Panko breadcrumbs, 2 teaspoons Slap Ya Mama seasoning, 2 teaspoons garlic powder, 1 teaspoon paprika, 1 teaspoon black pepper, and ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes until thoroughly combined.
6. Mix : Cheese Filling: In a large bowl, combine the 2 cups shredded pepper jack cheese, 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese, and the cooled sautéed jalapeños. Mix well to distribute the jalapeños evenly.
7. Shape & : Flash Freeze Cheese Balls: Roll the cheese mixture into small, bite-sized balls, about 1-inch in diameter. Place the formed cheese balls onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper (this prevents sticking). Place the baking sheet with the cheese balls in the freezer for 30-45 minutes to firm them up significantly. This flash-freezing step is crucial as it helps the cheese balls hold their shape during

frying and prevents the cheese from melting too quickly.

8. Heat : Oil: In a large, deep frying pan or skillet (or a Dutch oven for deeper frying), heat 1-2 cups of vegetable oil over medium-high heat. The oil should be hot but not smoking, ideally reaching about 350°F (175°C) on a deep-fry thermometer.
9. Dredge : Cheese Balls: Remove the firm cheese balls from the freezer. One at a time, roll each cheese ball thoroughly in the flour from the first container, shaking off any excess. Then, dip it into the egg and buttermilk mixture, letting excess drip off. Finally, coat it completely in the seasoned Panko breadcrumbs from the third container, pressing gently to ensure a good coating. Place the breaded cheese balls back on the parchment-lined baking sheet.
10. Fry the : Bites: Carefully place 6-8 breaded cheese bites at a time into the hot oil. Do not overcrowd the pan, as this will drop the oil temperature and lead to soggy bites. Fry until golden brown and crispy on all sides, turning occasionally with a slotted spoon or tongs (this usually takes about 2-3 minutes total).
11. Drain & : Serve: Remove the fried cheese bites using a slotted spoon and place them on a plate lined with paper towels to drain any excess oil. Work in batches until all the cheese bites are fried. Serve immediately.
12. Serve: Serve these crispy, cheesy jalapeño bites hot with your favorite dipping sauce, such as ranch dressing, spicy mayo, or marinara sauce.

SWAPS & NOTES

Cheese: The combination of pepper jack and sharp cheddar offers both heat and classic cheese flavor.

You can adjust the ratio or use other good melting cheeses like Monterey Jack, Colby Jack, or even a smoked gouda.

Jalapeños: Removing the seeds and membranes greatly reduces the heat.

Sautøing them first mellows their flavor and ensures they are soft within the bite.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Flash Freeze is Key: Do NOT skip the flash-freezing step!

This is absolutely essential for the cheese balls to maintain their shape during frying and prevent the cheese from melting out too quickly.

Dry Jalapeños: Ensure your sautéed jalapeños are cool and as dry as possible before mixing them into the cheese.

Oil Temperature Control: Use a thermometer to maintain the oil temperature around 350°F (175°C).

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/crispy-jalapeno-cheese-bites-perfect-fried-appetizer/>