

Balsamic Blackberry Bliss Grilled Cheese: A Gourmet Twist on a Classic

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20 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 4 slices of artisan bread: Sourdough, ciabatta, or a thick rustic white bread work best to hold the heavy fillings.
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter: Softened to room temperature for even spreading.
- 1 cup fresh blackberries: Look for plump, dark berries.
- 1 tablespoon balsamic glaze: This provides the concentrated tang.
- 1 teaspoon honey: To balance the acidity.
- 4 ounces brie cheese: Sliced (keep the rind or remove it based on preference).
- 2 ounces goat cheese (optional): For an extra layer of tang and creaminess.
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil: Chopped finely to add a herbal high note.
- ... teaspoon black pepper: To bring a subtle warmth.

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Prepare the Blackberry Filling:** In a small bowl, place your fresh blackberries. Use a fork to gently mash them-you want some chunks left for texture, not a smooth puree. Stir in the balsamic glaze, honey, and black pepper. Let this mixture sit for about 5 minutes. This "macerating" process allows the juices to release and the flavors to meld.
- 2. Butter the Bread:** Spread the softened butter generously on one side of each of the four bread slices. Don't skimp here; the butter is what creates that golden-brown, shattered-glass crust.
- 3. Assemble the Sandwich:** Turn two slices over so the buttered side is down. Layer the unbuttered side with slices of brie. Spoon the blackberry mixture over the cheese and sprinkle with fresh chopped basil. If you're using goat cheese, crumble it over the berries now. Top with the remaining bread slices, buttered side facing out.
- 4. Grill to Perfection:** Heat a non-stick skillet or griddle over medium-low heat. This is crucial! Because of the honey and balsamic glaze, the sandwich can burn quickly if the heat is too high. Place the sandwiches in the pan and cook for 3-4 minutes. Flip carefully once the bottom is golden brown and the cheese begins to slump. Cook for another 3-4 minutes until the bread is crispy and the filling is gooey.
- 5. Serve and Enjoy:** Remove from the heat and let it sit for one minute-this prevents the filling from sliding out when you cut it. Slice diagonally and serve warm.

SWAPS & NOTES

The Bread: If you can't find sourdough, a thick-cut brioche adds a lovely sweetness, though it is softer and more delicate to flip.

The Cheese: If brie isn't your favorite, Camembert is a great substitute.

For those who want a sharper profile, try a mild white cheddar paired with the goat cheese.

The Fruit: While blackberries are the star here, this method works beautifully with raspberries or even sliced strawberries.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Low and Slow: I cannot stress this enough.

The sugars in the berries and balsamic will caramelize quickly.

Low heat ensures the cheese melts completely before the bread burns.

Don't Over-Mash: Keep some structure in your berries so the sandwich has height and varied texture.

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