

The Perfect Bite: Cheddar, Pepper Jack, Salami, and Pickles in One Simple Appetizer

Let me walk you through how I make it and share a few tips to make it your own.



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10 min

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INGREDIENTS

8 oz block of sharp cheddar, cut into cubes
8 oz block of pepper jack cheese, cut into cubes
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup white wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar
1 tsp dried Italian seasoning
1/2 tsp garlic powder
Salt and pepper, to taste
1/2 cup sliced salami, cut into bite-sized pieces
1/2 cup small pickles, like cornichons or dill pickles, sliced
Fresh herbs, like parsley or basil, for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- 1.** Marinate the Cheese: First, I cut both blocks of cheese into bite-sized cubes. You don't need to be too precise here-just aim for something you can grab with a toothpick or small fork.
- 2.** In a large bowl, I whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, a pinch of salt, and some freshly cracked pepper. It's a quick vinaigrette that gives the cheese a tangy, herby kick.
- 3.** Once the marinade's ready, I toss in the cheese cubes and gently stir to coat. I cover the bowl and let it sit in the fridge for at least 30 minutes-an hour or two is even better if I have the time. The flavors soak in without breaking down the cheese, and everything gets that punchy, garlicky zip.
- 4.** Assemble the Appetizer: After the cheese has marinated, I pull it out and start building the platter. I spread the cubes out over a serving dish, then tuck the salami pieces in between. I try to create little pockets of flavor-some cheese here, a few slices of salami there, and scattered pickles to bring the whole thing together.
- 5.** I like using small pickles like cornichons because they're just the right size and have a briny bite that complements the richness of the cheese and meat.
- 6.** Garnish and Serve: Right before serving, I sprinkle everything with fresh parsley or basil if I have it on hand. It adds a pop of color and a touch of freshness. If I'm serving this to a crowd, I'll add some cocktail picks or mini forks to make it easy for people to grab and go.
- 7.** I also love setting out a bowl of crackers or toasted baguette slices on the side, though honestly, this

platter is good enough to eat on its own.

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

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