



Kid-Built Cuban Flatbread + Charred Cucumber Corn Salad + Cuban Cucumber Mojito Slushies

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 40 / Cook Time 12 / Serves 4 - 6

Shopping List

FRESH

1 bunch fresh mint

1 bunch fresh cilantro (if using with or instead of mint in flatbread and salad)

1 garlic clove

2 small cucumbers

2 C corn (from about 3 corn cobs or about 16 oz frozen + thawed corn)

3 limes

DAIRY

1/2 C queso blanco (or queso fresco/Monterey jack/Parmesan cheese) ****(see allergy subs below)****

PANTRY

6 T olive oil + more for cooking and drizzling

1 C all-purpose flour ****(see allergy subs below)****

3 tsp salt

1 pinch ground black pepper

1/2 C canned black beans

1/2 tsp paprika

1 C honey

1 T apple cider vinegar (or white/red wine vinegar)

HAVE ON HAND

2 C warm water

1 to 2 C ice

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

grate: to reduce food, like a carrot, to very small shreds or pieces of the same size by rubbing it on a tool with an outside surface that has holes with cutting edges (a grater).

sauté: to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

whisk: to beat or stir ingredients vigorously with a fork or whisk to mix, blend, or incorporate air.

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

grate: to reduce food, like a carrot, to very small shreds or pieces of the same size by rubbing it on a tool with an outside surface that has holes with cutting edges (a grater).

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

sauté: to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

toss: to lightly lift and drop food items together or coat food items with flour, or a sauce or dressing, as in a salad.

blend: to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

peel: to remove the skin or rind from something using your hands or a metal tool.

Equipment

Rolling pin (optional)

Liquid measuring cup

Peeler

Blender

Skillet

Cutting board + kid-safe knife

- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Can opener
- Grater
- Small bowl
- Whisk
- Citrus juicer (optional)
- Medium mixing bowl
- Heat-resistant spatula or pancake turner
- Kid-safe knife or paring knife to slice flatbread

Ingredients

Kid-Built Cuban Flatbread

- 4 T olive oil + more for cooking and drizzling
- 1 C all-purpose flour **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free flour)****
- 1 1/2 C warm water
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1 T fresh mint and/or cilantro leaves
- 1/4 C grated queso blanco (or queso fresco/Monterey jack/Parmesan cheese) **** (Omit for DAIRY ALLERGY or sub dairy-free/nut-free cheese)****
- 2 T Charred Cucumber Corn Salad (see recipe)

Charred Cucumber Corn Salad

- 1 garlic clove
- 1 small cucumber
- 2 C corn (frozen + thawed or fresh off the cob)
- 1/2 C canned black beans
- 1 T fresh mint and/or cilantro leaves

1/4 C grated queso blanco (or queso fresco/Monterey jack/Parmesan cheese) ******(Omit for DAIRY ALLERGY or sub dairy-free/nut-free cheese)**

1/2 tsp paprika

2 tsp salt

2 T olive oil

1 T honey/sugar

1 T apple cider vinegar (or white/red wine vinegar)

1 lime

Cuban Cucumber Mojito Slushies

1 handful fresh mint

1/2 C honey

1/2 C hot water

1 cucumber

2 limes

1 to 2 C ice

Food Allergen Substitutions

Kid-Built Cuban Flatbread

Gluten/Wheat: Substitute gluten-free flour in Flatbread.

Dairy: Omit queso blanco or substitute dairy-free/nut-free cheese

Charred Cucumber Corn Salad

Dairy: Omit cheese or substitute dairy-free/nut-free cheese.

Cuban Cucumber Mojito Slushies

Instructions

Kid-Built Cuban Flatbread

measure + whisk

Whisk together the **4 tablespoons oil, 1 cup flour, 1 1/2 cups warm water, 1 teaspoon salt,** and **1 pinch of black pepper** in a medium bowl. Let rest for at least 15 minutes and up to 2 hours to give the flour time to absorb the water. It will look like a thin pancake batter. While the batter rests, make the Charred Cucumber Corn Salad (recipe below). Then heat a non-stick skillet on your stovetop to medium heat.

grate + tear

Grate about **1/4 cup queso blanco**, and have kids tear up **1 tablespoon of mint or cilantro leaves**.

heat + spread

Add about a teaspoon of oil to the skillet and swirl to coat the bottom. Add **2 tablespoons of the prepared Charred Cucumber Corn Salad** (see recipe) to your preheated, oiled skillet and spread it around. Whisk the flatbread batter quickly and then pour half into the hot skillet (or all if making a thicker flatbread), tilting the pan to coat the entire surface of the pan with the batter. Add the grated cheese and the mint and/or cilantro on top of the batter.

flip + brown

After about 3 minutes, when the edges are firm, gently lift the flatbread and flip it. Cook on the other side for another 2 to 3 minutes, until both surfaces are dry and beginning to brown.

slice + serve

Use a spatula to work your way under the flatbread and ease it from the pan. Slice it into wedges or squares, sprinkle with extra salt and pepper, a little more cheese if you like, and drizzle with olive oil. Repeat with any remaining batter and serve with the Charred Cucumber Corn Salad (see recipe) on the side or top.

Charred Cucumber Corn Salad

chop + grate

Have kids chop up **1 garlic clove** and **1 cucumber**. Then, measure **2 cups corn** and **1/2 cup black beans**. Tear up **1 tablespoon of mint or cilantro leaves**. Have kids grate **1/4 cup queso blanco**, and set it to the side.

add + sauté

Add the chopped garlic to a preheated, medium-heat skillet with a little oil to sauté. Then immediately and carefully add the corn. Cook the corn just until char marks are visible, about 3 to 5 minutes.

measure + whisk + squeeze

While the corn and garlic cook, measure and whisk the dressing ingredients in a small bowl: **{1/2 teaspoon paprika, 2 teaspoons salt, 2 tablespoons oil, 1 tablespoon honey,** and **1 tablespoon**

vinegar. Squeeze in the juice of **1 lime.** Add the hot corn and garlic to the dressing, whisk well, and set to the side to cool.

toss + serve

After the salad has cooled, add the pre-measured beans, grated cheese, chopped cucumbers, and the torn mint or cilantro leaves. Toss everything well. Serve on the side with the flatbread.

Cuban Cucumber Mojito Slushies

intro

This mocktail is a fun twist on a traditional Cuban mojito, which is usually made with mint and sugar. Making a honey-water solution is a useful trick to get honey into a drink by diluting it half and half with hot water. This way the honey mixes properly into your drink instead of becoming gloopy at the bottom of your glass. Now you can drink your cucumber!

smash + tear

Have kids smash and tear up **1 handful of fresh mint** with a rolling pin or their hands.

mix + peel + blend

Mix **1/2 cup of honey** with **1/2 cup of hot water** and stir to combine. Peel **1 cucumber**, slice in half lengthwise, and scoop out and discard the seeds. Toss the cucumber into your blender with the honey water and mint. Blend until smooth.

squeeze + pretend + enjoy

Have kids squeeze the juice of **2 limes** into the cucumber purée, then add **1 to 2 cups of ice.** Blend again. Drink while pretending you're on a beautiful Cuban beach, and enjoy!

Featured Ingredient: Cucumber!

Hi! I'm Cucumber!

"I'm as cool as a cucumber. Actually, I am a cucumber! I have a thick, dark green peel; I am longer than I am wide; and I am a fruit that's often used as a veggie! There are three types of cucumbers: slicing, pickling, and burpless. The slicing and burpless varieties, with or without their peels, are tasty and refreshing sliced, chopped, or minced in salads, sandwiches, salsa, sauces, appetizers, and smoothies or other drinks. The pickling cucumber eventually becomes a pickle (after its pickling spa treatment)!"

History & Etymology

Cucumbers are one of the oldest known cultivated vegetables. They have been grown for at least 3,000 years and are believed to have originated in India.

The early Greeks or Romans may have introduced cucumbers to Europe. Records indicate that the French cultivated them in the 9th century and the English in the 14th century. Then Spanish explorers brought cucumbers to the Americas in the 16th century.

Pickled cucumbers, or pickles, may have been produced first by workers building the Great Wall of China or by people in Mesopotamia's Tigris Valley.

A 1630 book called "New England's Plantation" by Francis Higginson, describing plants grown in a garden on Conant's Island in Boston Harbor, mentions "cowcumbers." The cucumber may have been dubbed cowcumber due to thinking at that time that uncooked vegetables were fit only for cows.

The word "cucumber" comes from late Middle English, from the Old French "cocombre," from the Latin "cucumis."

Anatomy

The cucumber is a creeping vine plant that is part of the Cucurbitaceae or gourd family. Other members are melon, squash, pumpkin, and watermelon. Cucumbers grow on a vine, often in sandy soil. Sandy soil warms faster in the spring, giving cucumbers a more favorable growing environment.

Cucumber length varies. Slicers are 6 to 8 inches, burpless 8 to 10 inches, and picklers are 3 to 5 inches long.

Cucumbers have a mild melon flavor. Slicing cucumbers will have seeds in their flesh, preferably small, soft seeds. Burpless cucumbers are slightly sweeter with a more tender skin and are easier to digest. They may also have no or very few seeds.

"Cool as a cucumber" isn't just a catchy phrase. A cucumber's inner temperature can be 10 to 20 degrees cooler than the outside air. This is because it consists mainly of water, which also applies to watermelons, and it takes more energy to heat the water inside the cucumber than the air around it. No wonder these are such summertime favorites! However, we don't say "as cool as a watermelon," so how did this expression become part of our vocabulary? It may have come from a poem in John Gay's *Poems, New Song on New Similes* from 1732.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Cucumbers are ready to be harvested 50 to 70 days after planting. They are ripe when they are firm and bright or dark green. Slicing cucumbers will be six to eight inches long. Avoid leaving them on the vine too long, or their taste may become bitter and their rind tougher.

At the store, look for firm cucumbers without blemishes, wrinkles, or soft spots. Organic cucumbers are the best choice to avoid pesticide residue, if available. In addition, washing them reduces the amount of residue and pathogens.

If you don't eat your fresh, uncut cucumbers immediately, store them in your refrigerator crisper drawer in a plastic bag for up to three days if unwaxed and up to a week if waxed.

You can eat slicing and burpless cucumbers by themselves, slice or chop them into salads, or blend them

into sauces and smoothies.

Pickling cucumbers are pickled whole or sliced in brine, sugar, vinegar, and spices. There are several kinds of pickles, such as sweet, bread-and-butter, gherkin, and kosher dill.

Nutrition

Cucumbers are 96 percent water, have very little fat, and are low in calories.

Cucumbers contain small amounts of the vitamins you need every day and 16 percent of the daily value of vitamin K, which helps with blood clotting.