



Kid-Built Cuban Flatbread

By Erin Fletter

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

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.

Equipment

- Skillet
- Medium mixing bowl
- Measuring spoons
- Dry measuring cups
- Liquid measuring cup
- Whisk
- Grater
- 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)

Food Allergen Substitutions

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

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

Instructions

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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.

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.