

# Southwestern Cheese Panini

Lots of colorful vegetables and salsa make this cheesy panini prettier than any grilled cheese you've ever seen. The small amount of Cheddar cheese in this sandwich goes a long way because it is shredded and sharp. Serve with a mixed salad and you've got a delightful lunch or light supper. If you happen to have a panini maker, go ahead and skip Step 3 and grill the panini according to the manufacturer's directions.

**4 servings** | **Active Time:** 25 minutes | **Total Time:** 25 minutes

## Ingredients

- 4 ounces shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup shredded zucchini
- 1/2 cup shredded carrot
- 1/4 cup finely chopped red onion
- 1/4 cup prepared salsa
- 1 tablespoon chopped pickled jalapeño pepper, (optional)
- 8 slices whole-wheat bread
- 2 teaspoons canola oil

## Preparation

1. Have four 15-ounce cans and a medium skillet (not nonstick) ready by the stove.
2. Combine Cheddar, zucchini, carrot, onion, salsa and jalapeño (if using) in a medium bowl. Divide among 4 slices of bread and top with the remaining bread.
3. Heat 1 teaspoon canola oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Place 2 panini in the pan. Place the medium skillet on top of the panini, then weigh it down with the cans. Cook the panini until golden on one side, about 2 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium-low, flip the panini, replace the top skillet and cans, and cook until the second side is golden, 1 to 3 minutes more. Repeat with another 1 teaspoon oil and the remaining panini.

## Nutrition

**Per serving** : 331 Calories; 14 g Fat; 5 g Sat; 2 g Mono; 30 mg Cholesterol; 37 g Carbohydrates; 16 g Protein; 5 g Fiber; 523 mg Sodium; 163 mg Potassium

