

Tomato Moxarella Melts

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: side item for 2-4 people

Ingredients

For the Moxarella Cheese:

- 1/4 cup raw cashews (soaked in water for several hours and then drained IF you don't have a high powered blender)
- 1 cup hot water
- 2 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon tapioca starch
- 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil (optional)
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- 3/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 4 tablespoons nutritional yeast

All Other Ingredients:

- 3 or 4 "globe" tomatoes, each sliced into 4 pieces (*firm, yet slight give when squeezed*)
- balsamic vinegar
- garlic salt
- coconut sugar
- grape seed oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh oregano, minced (*garnish*)
- 1/4 cup fresh basil (*garnish*)

Step 1: Prepare tomato slices for the oven.

Cut each tomato into 4 vertical slices. If you want to pile on the mozzarella cheese, use 3 tomatoes (shown in pictures). However, if you're making this dish for 4 people, I suggest using 4 tomatoes and using the mozzarella less sparingly.

Spread the tomatoes on a greased baking sheet and begin to decorate with vinegar, garlic salt, coconut sugar, and grape seed oil.

You'll notice that I didn't measure out amounts for the balsamic vinegar, garlic salt, coconut sugar, and grape seed oil. Drizzle the grape seed oil on all slices. If you must know an exact amount of balsamic vinegar, I suggest 1/4 teaspoon per slice. As far as the garlic salt and coconut sugar go, just grab a pinch and conservatively sprinkle a bit of it on each individual slice. Set aside.

Step 2: Create mozzarella cheese.

The mozzarella cheese is high maintenance and needy, so it requires your full attention. That's why the tomatoes must sit and be patient during this process.

Start by placing cashews in a blender. I have a 600-watt blender (NutriBullet), and it can grind the cashews to a pulp. If you have this kind of power or more, skip the soaking process and just grind the cashews alone first. After that, throw all the other ingredients in the blender and mix.

Place the liquid in a small saucepan on the stove at medium high heat. Stir constantly for about 4 minutes. Once you see clumps start to form, reduce your heat to medium and continue stirring for another 2-3 minutes. Once your liquid transforms into a solid, stringy clump, remove from heat.

Now, take a tablespoon and spoon out clumps of cheese onto your tomatoes. If there are any mistakes (maybe cheese dripping off the side of a tomato), no need to worry! You can fix mistakes by simply picking up the cheese and placing it back onto the tomato. It's fool proof!

Step 3: Bake and prep.

With your oven set to 350°F / 176°C, place your tomatoes in the oven for 20 minutes. You'll notice that this is mostly for your tomatoes to roast, as the cheese doesn't go through many changes during this period.

When the 20 minutes are up, crank up the oven to 500°F / 260°C and put a timer on for 3 minutes. This will help your cheese brown juuuust a little. Keep in mind that I live in Florida, where 3 minutes is perfect for my subtropical sea-level climate. If you live in a different climate, I suggest you keep an eye on it. Three minutes might be too long for someone, say, in the mountains.

Step 4: Garnish and serve.

When the tomatoes are fresh out of the oven, place them on a serving dish and sprinkle the oregano on top. As far as the basil leaves go, I like to put several smaller leaves on top of each tomato. For larger leaves, you may have to cut them into quarters with your fingers.