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APPETIZER EASY MAIN DISH

RECIPES

Appetizer Recipe: Flatbreads with Goat Cheese, Caramelized Onions, and Basil

By ELIZABETH PASSARELLA Updated Jan 29, 2020

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(Image credit: [Dana Velden](#))

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Here's a recipe that can easily work both as a party-worthy appetizer or as a light supper, perhaps served with a salad dressed in a sharp, mustardy vinaigrette. The sweet caramelized onions, sharp goat cheese and pungent fresh basil work together beautifully, especially when supported by a crisp but chewy flatbread.



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Basil isn't exactly in season right now but it's pretty easy to find wherever you go. (In fact, I purchased all the ingredients for this recipe at my local Trader Joe's.) Fresh thyme or rosemary would make fine alternatives to basil. The onions and goat cheese can handle good, strong herbs!

My favorite flatbreads are the 7-inch Middle Eastern Flatbreads from Trader Joe's. If you use these store-bought flatbreads and make your [caramelized onions](#) ahead of time (you can even [freeze them](#)), this meal come together quickly.

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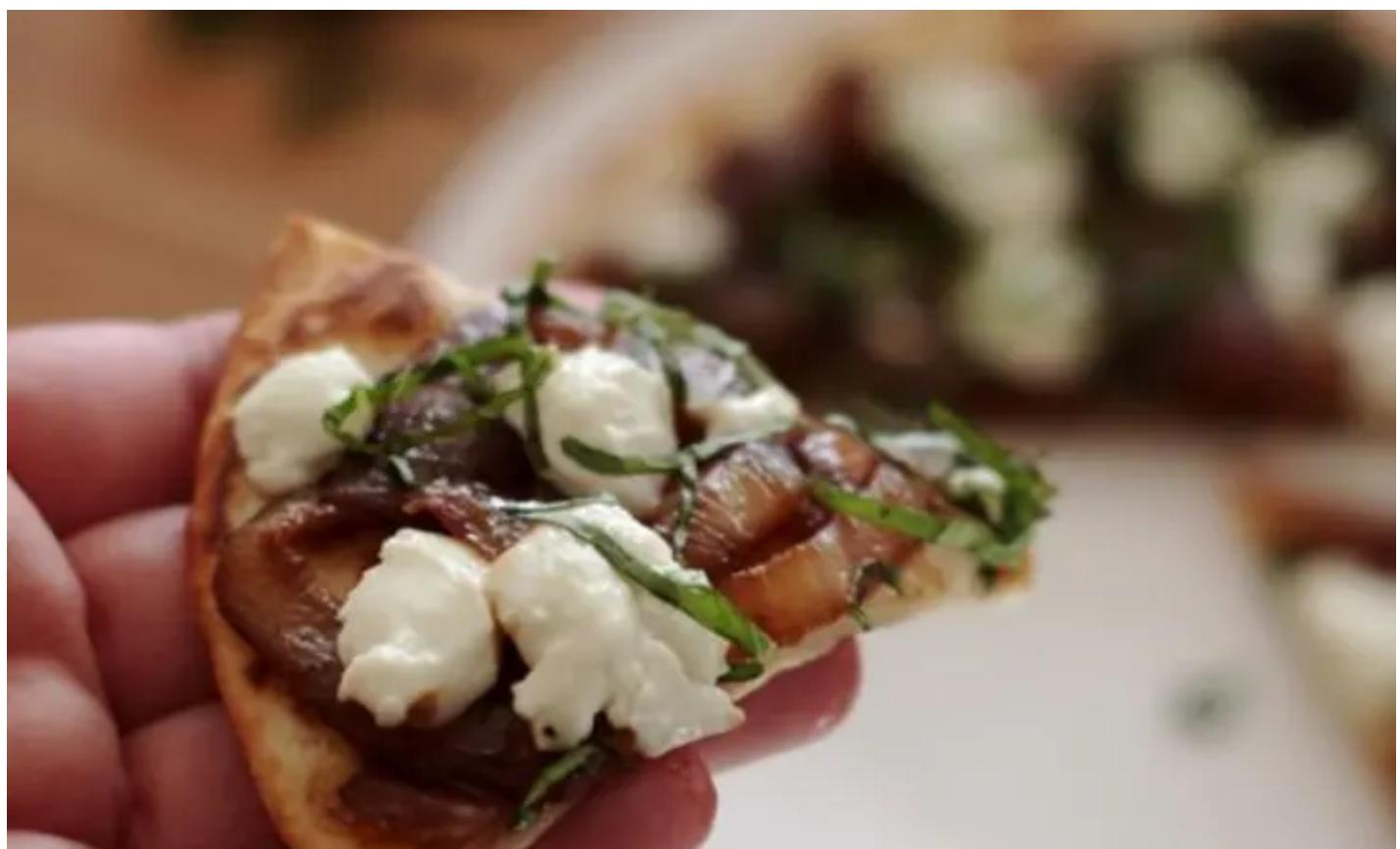
shredded the basil as thinly as possible so that I was able to scatter a thin, even layer all over the



I like the Trader Joe's flatbreads because they cook up with a crispy outside, but can still be a little moist and chewy. They cut easily into 6 triangles, which make a good two-bite appetizer. As mentioned, you could switch these up with different herbs, or add an additional flavor note such as bits of fire-roasted red peppers or seared mushrooms.

They had sweet Maui onions at TJ's, so I omitted the sugar in the caramelizing process when I tested this. In general, the sugar is optional, as it is possible to caramelize onions without sugar. You could also make these with red onions as well as the yellow.

I tested one flat bread in a toaster oven to see if it would work and had excellent results. If you're making a small batch, or if your oven is otherwise occupied, don't hesitate to use it. Just keep an eye on things as the heating elements are closer in the toaster oven than in a regular oven, so it's easy to burn the flatbreads. If I were making these for a party, I would definitely get the onions done ahead of time, making this one quick appetizer that will pay off big in ease and flavor! —Dana



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YIELD

Serves 4 as a main dish or 6-8 as an appetizer
(using 7-inch round flatbreads)

INGREDIENTS

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1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for brushing on the bread
2 yellow onions, sliced into 1/4-inch half moons
1 teaspoon salt
Freshly ground pepper
1 teaspoon sugar (optional)
4 flatbreads
4 ounces goat cheese
8 to 10 large fresh basil leaves, cut into chiffonade(<https://www.thekitchn.com/word-of-mouth-c-3525>)
Pinch of crunchy sea salt, such as Maldon

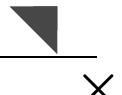
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Preheat the oven



and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. The heat should be low enough that the onions sizzle quietly but don't brown too quickly. Add the sugar (if using) and continue to cook for another 10 to 15 minutes, until the onions are dark golden and a darker brown crust begins to form on the bottom of the skillet.

3

Add a splash of water to the pan. It will bubble furiously, picking up the browned bits. Continue to simmer until the water has evaporated but the onions haven't begun to brown up the bottom of the pan again, about 5 minutes. Turn off the heat.

4

Brush a bit of olive oil on each flatbread. Scatter the onions evenly over each flatbread and crumble a quarter of goat cheese on each. Bake for about 8 minutes, until the cheese is beginning to melt and the flatbread gets slightly crisp.

5

Remove from the oven, sprinkle a pinch of Maldon salt and the basil over the top of each bread, and cut into pieces. Serve warm.

RECIPE NOTES

Recipe originally published on April 21, 2009.

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Elizabeth Passarella is the author of the essay collection *Good Apple* and a contributing editor at *Southern Living*. A former editor at *Real Simple* and *Vogue*, she has spent more than 20 years writing about food, travel, home design, and parenting in outlets including *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Parents*, *Martha Stewart Weddings*, *Coastal Living*, *Airbnb*, and *The Kitchn*. Elizabeth grew up in Memphis, Tennessee and now lives with her husband and three children in New York City.

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