

# Pizza Panini with Red-Leaf Salad

Many years ago, on a cold night in Champaign, Illinois, a young chef was preparing family meal (the traditional end-of-shift meal for restaurant employees). Inspired by the simplicity of the fresh herbs in the kitchen, he invented and prepared the "Pizza Panini." The staff and owner loved the meal so much that the next day, it appeared on the menu and stayed there for years to come. That young chef would grow up to become our very own chef and co-founder, Matthew Wadiak.



## Ingredients

- 8 Ounces Mozzarella
- 3 Cloves Garlic
- 2 Ciabatta Rolls
- 1 Bunch Oregano
- 1 Carrot
- ½ Head Red Leaf Lettuce
- 1 Mini Cucumber
- 1 Shallot
- 1 Tablespoon Red Wine Vinegar
- 1 Yellow Onion
- 1 15-Ounce Can Diced Tomatoes
- 1 Teaspoon Dijon Mustard
- ¼ Cup Grated Parmesan Cheese

Makes 2 Servings  
About 700 Calories Per Serving



# Instructions



## Prepare the ingredients:

Wash and dry the fresh produce. Thinly slice the mozzarella. Peel and mince the garlic and shallot. Place the shallot in a bowl with the **red wine vinegar**. Slice the ciabatta rolls in half horizontally. Pick the oregano leaves off the stems; discard the stems. Peel and thinly slice the carrot on an angle. Roughly chop the lettuce. Thinly slice the cucumber into rounds. Peel and small dice the onion.



## Make the sauce:

In a medium pot, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium until hot. Add the **onion** and **garlic** and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 4 minutes, or until softened. Add the **tomatoes** and season with salt and pepper. Bring the mixture to a simmer, then reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, 11 to 13 minutes, or until the sauce is reduced in volume and thickened. Stir in the **oregano** and cook 30 seconds to 1 minute. Remove from heat.



## Make the vinaigrette:

While the sauce simmers, whisk the **Dijon mustard** into the shallot-vinegar mixture and season with salt and pepper. Slowly whisk in **2 tablespoons of olive oil** until well combined.



## Assemble the panini:

Lay the **ciabatta bread** out on a work surface, cut side up. Spread a layer of **tomato sauce** on both halves of both rolls. Top 2 halves with the **mozzarella cheese**. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle **half of the Parmesan cheese** (save the rest for the salad) over the remaining halves. Carefully put the halves together to form 2 sandwiches.



## Grill the panini:

In a large pan, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-low until hot. Add the **sandwiches** to the pan and place a heavy pot on top to weigh and press the sandwiches down. Cook 2 to 3 minutes per side, or until the cheese is melted and the bread is toasted. Transfer the cooked sandwiches to a plate.



## Dress the salad & plate your dish:

While the sandwiches cook, in a large bowl, combine the **lettuce**, **carrot**, **cucumber** and **remaining Parmesan cheese**. Add enough of the **vinaigrette** to coat the greens (you may have extra vinaigrette) and toss to combine. To plate your dish, cut each **sandwich** in half. Divide the sandwiches and **salad** between 2 plates and serve with the **remaining tomato sauce** on the side, for dipping. Enjoy!