



GRILLED FLATBREAD WITH HUMMUS AND VEGGIES

For our purposes there's virtually no difference between a pizza and a flatbread. I've read that flatbreads are sometimes made with unleavened dough, but it's a distinction that few seem to be concerned with. Flatbreads do, however, often come with a license to experiment with toppings outside the box — hummus and grilled veggies, for instance. This flatbread is sensational for summer grilling, when we have fresh peppers and eggplant in abundance. Crispy, colorful, and full of grilled charm, it's a showpiece appetizer that will put regular old hummus and crackers to shame.

1 Prepare the dough and set it aside to rise. Meanwhile, preheat your grill. Cut off the stem end of the eggplant. Cut the eggplant lengthwise into ½-inch-thick slabs and set them aside on a large rimmed baking sheet. Put the peppers on the sheet also. Cut three or four ½-inch-thick rings of the onion. Peel and place on the baking sheet. Brush all the vegetables lavishly with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill the veggies until they're tender and pleasantly charred, brushing with more olive oil when you turn them. Put them back on the baking sheet to cool. When they're cool enough to handle, peel the blistered skin off the peppers. Cut everything into big, bite-size pieces and set aside.

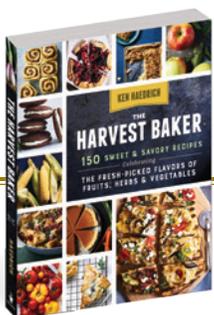
2 Once the dough has risen, punch it down, divide it in half, and knead each half into a ball on a lightly floured surface. Cover one piece of dough with plastic wrap and let it rest on a floured surface for 10 minutes. Loosely wrap the other piece in plastic wrap and put it in the fridge. If your grill is large enough, get one zone of the grill good and hot and have another that's slightly less so.

MAKES 2 PIZZAS, 3 TO 4 SERVINGS EACH

Food Processor Pizza Dough (page 107) or Hand Method Pizza Dough (page 105)

- 1 large eggplant
- 2 large bell peppers, halved and cored
- 1 large sweet onion
- ½ cup (or more) olive oil, for brushing the veggies and crust
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 cups (about 1 pound) hummus, store-bought or homemade
- 2 cups crumbled feta cheese
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

RECIPE CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



GRILLED FLATBREAD WITH HUMMUS AND VEGGIES, CONTINUED

3 Using your fingers, flatten the nonrefrigerated piece of dough into a 7- or 8-inch circle on a floured surface. Let it rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Drizzle 2 tablespoons of the olive oil on a large rimmed baking sheet and spread it around with your fingers. Place the flattened dough on the oiled sheet and press it out a little more. Turn the dough over, and keep flattening and gently stretching it with your fingers and palms until you have a 13- to 14-inch oblong.

4 In one smooth movement, gingerly lift the dough off the baking sheet, trying to not stretch it, and drape it on the grill in the “hot zone.” *Don't try to move the dough for the first few minutes.* After 3 to 4 minutes, when the dough has firmed up a bit and started to blister, use tongs to lift the sides here and there to see how it's doing. You should see browning and grill marks, but if you see a lot of scorching, slide your pizza dough over to the moderate zone.

5 After about 5 minutes, your dough should be ready to turn. There are several ways to do this, but the easiest way is to lift a corner with your tongs, grab the pizza with oven mitts on, and turn it over by hand. Smaller pizzas can probably be flipped with nothing more than a wide spatula.

6 As soon as you flip the crust, liberally brush the surface, particularly the edges, with more of the olive oil. Cook on the second side for 2 minutes, then spread 1 cup of the hummus over the surface. Top with half of the veggies and half of the cheese.

7 Cover the grill and cook the pizza another 4 to 5 minutes. Slide the pizza onto a baking sheet and then onto a cutting board. Sprinkle with half the parsley, then slice and serve. Or if you prefer, you can keep the pizza warm in your oven for a few minutes, before cutting, so you have time to start the second pizza and get it on the grill before the first one is served.

