



Makes 4 sandwiches
Preparation Time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

2 15-oz. cans no-salt-added chickpeas, rinsed and drained (3 cups total)

¼ cup soaked raw cashews (see tip, recipe intro)

3 tablespoons nutritional yeast

1½ teaspoons white miso paste

1 tablespoon + 1½ teaspoons balsamic vinegar

2½ teaspoon dried Italian seasoning

¼ teaspoon sea salt, plus more to taste

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

8 oz. fresh cremini mushrooms, sliced

⅓ cup chopped toasted walnuts

1 8-oz. can no-salt-added tomato sauce

1 teaspoon fennel seeds

1 teaspoon smoked paprika

½ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper

4 to 6 whole grain hot dog buns, such as Ezekiel brand

½ cup finely chopped red or yellow onion

Vegan Italian Grinder Sandwich

This heart-healthy vegan twist on a classic East Coast delicacy features ground **Italian** “sausage” made from mushrooms, chickpeas, and walnuts. Instead of cheese, our version is topped with a cheesy cashew-based sauce. Serve these saucy subs warm on whole grain hot dog buns with finely chopped red onion and pickled pepperoncini peppers for extra flavor. If you can’t do nuts, skip the cheese sauce and use this **vegan queso**.

Tips

Gluten-free version: To make this gluten-free, use miso paste and pepperoncini peppers that are certified gluten-free. You’ll also need to use gluten-free whole-grain hot dog buns or another gluten-free bread option.

Cashews: Soak cashews in enough very hot water to cover for 15 minutes. Drain and rinse.

For more inspiration, check out these tasty ideas:

- [Carrot Dogs](#)
- [Quick and Easy Jackfruit Salad Sandwiches](#)
- [“No-Tuna” Salad Sandwich](#)
- [Tempeh BBQ Sandwiches with Pineapple Slaw](#)
- [Mushroom Cheesesteak Sandwiches](#)

By Ellen Boeke

- 1 To make cheese sauce: In a blender combine ½ cup of chickpeas, the cashews, nutritional yeast, miso paste, 1½ teaspoons of the balsamic vinegar, ½ teaspoon of the Italian seasoning, and ½ cup water. Cover and blend until smooth. Season to taste with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.
- 2 In an extra-large skillet cook mushrooms over medium-high 6 to 8 minutes or until browned and liquid has evaporated, stirring occasionally and adding water, 1 to 2 tablespoons at a time, as needed to prevent sticking.
- 3 In a food processor combine cooked mushrooms, the remaining 2½ cups of chickpeas, and the walnuts. Pulse until chopped.
- 4 Place chickpea mixture in the skillet. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar, 2 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning, and ¼ teaspoon of salt along with the next five ingredients (through crushed red pepper); stir well to combine. Cook over medium until heated through, adding up to ¼ cup water if needed to reach desired consistency.
- 5 Preheat broiler. Open buns and arrange, cut sides up, on a baking sheet. Broil 4 inches from heat 2 to 4 minutes or until toasted. Fill buns with mushroom mixture. Top with onion and pepperoncini peppers. Drizzle with cheese sauce.