

Family Friendly

by Lukas Volger

Pressed Broccoli Rabe & Cheese

- These sandwiches are cheesy — but not too cheesy — substantial, and perfectly griddled.
- Broccoli rabe is [more closely related to turnips](#) than it is broccoli, which explains its pleasant bitterness.
- Some recipes instruct to discard the thick stems, but here you'll use as much of the vegetable as possible. It has a lot of texture, and makes these grilled sandwiches substantial and filling.
- If you don't have two skillets, use a plate that's topped with a few cans or other heavy objects, or just apply pressure with a spatula.
- [Calabrian chilies](#) are fruity and have some heat, and worth seeking out, I think. Substitute 2 tablespoons of canned green chilies or a healthy pinch of red pepper flakes if you can't find them.

Yield 4 sandwiches / Prep and cook time 30 minutes

1 bunch broccoli rabe
1 tablespoon olive oil
Salt
3 tablespoons minced shallot or red onion
2 tablespoons coarsely chopped calabrian chilies
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
4 ounces grated cheddar, mozzarella, or provolone (about 1 cup, packed)
8 slices sandwich bread
Mayonnaise (optional)
Butter for griddling

<https://lukasvolger.substack.com/p/pressed-broccoli-rabe-grilled-cheese>

1. While the broccoli rabe is still bundled up in a twist tie, chop off the bottom 1 to 2 inches of the stems, and discard them. Then untie and make a few more cuts running up the stems to create 1-inch pieces. Wash the greens, but don't spin them dry.
2. Warm a medium-sized (10-inch) skillet over medium heat, then add the olive oil and pile in the greens. Turn the greens a few times using tongs, season with a few pinches of salt, then cover and allow to cook until the thickest parts of the stem are tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Allow to cool for a few minutes, then gather up the greens and press them against the side of the pan to squeeze out excess liquid, and pour it off.
3. Combine the shallot or red onion with the Calabrian chilies, vinegar, and ½ teaspoon salt in a mixing bowl, then stir in the broccoli rabe and, once cool, the grated cheese. (This filling keeps well — you can cook off just one or two sandwiches and save the rest for making more sandwiches later.)
4. Arrange the bread over a cutting board, and spread each slice with a thin layer of mayonnaise, if using. Then divide the broccoli rabe–cheddar mixture between 4 of the slices. Close up the sandwiches.
5. Rise and dry the skillet, then preheat over medium to medium-low heat — not too hot. Cooking in batches of two or three, or however many will fit comfortably, fleck butter over the top sides of the sandwiches, then carefully flip over into the hot pan. Nudge them around to distribute the butter. Then set a second skillet, such as a cast-iron one of similar size, directly on top of the sandwiches to weigh them down. Cook until golden brown and crisp, 3 to 6 minutes. Now fleck butter over the top sides of the bread, flip, and repeat to griddle the opposite sides, until golden-brown and the cheese is oozing. Serve hot.