APPETIZER

Ham and Cheese *Tartines*

SERVES	PREP	COOK
8 (makes 24 tartines)	15 minutes	10 minutes

I had a version of these once at a wine bar in Dallas and couldn't get over them. Is it a grilled cheese? Kind of. But served open-faced, tartine-style, on buttery toasted brioche with a swipe of truffle aioli, nutty Comté, and silky Ibérico ham, it becomes something much more elegant. This appetizer is truly a show stopper. They're simple, but they leave a lasting impression!

INGREDIENTS

For the truffle aioli

- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon whole-grain Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon black truffle oil
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

For the toasts

- 1 loaf brioche
- 3 tablespoons salted butter, at room temperature

For the topping

- 4 ounces Comté cheese, thinly sliced
- ½ pound thinly sliced Ibérico ham (or prosciutto)

METHOD

1. **Make the truffle aioli.** In a small bowl, stir together the mayonnaise, Dijon, whole-grain Dijon, truffle oil, and salt until well combined. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.
2. **Toast the brioche.** Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 375°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper. Cut the brioche into ¾-inch-thick slices, then cut the slices into 24 bite-size squares, about 2 inches wide. Arrange on the prepared sheet pan and spread a thin layer of butter over the top of each square. Bake until lightly golden but still soft in the center, about 5 minutes.
3. **Add the cheese.** Remove the sheet pan from the oven and spread a thin layer of truffle aioli over each square. Top each with a thin slice of Comté and return to the oven until the cheese just softens, 2 to 3 minutes.
4. **Serve.** Transfer the tartines to a serving platter and top each with a ruffled piece of ham. Serve warm.

MAKE AHEAD

The truffle aioli can be made up to 3 days ahead and refrigerated.