

# My Boyfriend's Super Quesadillas

written by Andrea Lambert | September 21, 2015



My 97-year-old grandma makes her own tortillas. She was a migrant worker in California before settling in Reno to marry an Italian soldier. She changed her name from Begninia to Virginia to Americanize and never looked back. I remember eating cotija cheese in her kitchen. Watching her pat the masa rounds into shape.

I remember painting in my grandma's kitchen with the oil paints she gave me. Virginia was a painter when she was young but gave it up to raise children. I resolve to make the other decision, to choose art over family, for my abuelita. At home I paint late into the night. I get a ten-year IUD that will last through menopause. I choose art over children for my abuelita, because she did not live in a time that allowed that choice.

"Is it racist to title a chapter in my book, 'Real Mexican Food from a Real Mexican'? I ask my friend via text late one night. She so often listens to my late night worries. This chapter in my book, *Diary of a Hollywood Hedgewitch* mentions my boyfriend's quesadillas. It comes from a place of pure appreciation.

"No," my friend responds. "It would be pretty hard to get offended by that."

I hope so as I consider writing about the super quesadillas my boyfriend makes for me. I love them so. I love my boyfriend's Latino swagger the same way I love his punk rock authenticity. He's been playing guitar in punk bands since the 80's.

I first discovered the super quesadilla while living in San Francisco in the early millennium. A super quesadilla is a large quesadilla with meat fried in a folded flour tortilla with guacamole, sour cream and salsa. I ate carne asada super quesadillas in the bright neon whirl of Mission taquerias. Told a man in a bar about my culinary discovery and he remarked, "So many fats to love!" Between the thick guacamole, sour cream and tender cheese, I suppose there were.

A decade later in Hayward I ordered a Barbacoa super quesadilla from a Latin grocery store counter while I was visiting my sister. Took it home in a warm styrofoam container and ate it in wolf-like bites in her cool, expansive home. I told my sister over weed that night that I had only ever encountered the super quesadilla in the Bay Area. Now that I'm over nightclubs the super quesadilla is probably my favorite thing about the Bay Area. That and Lil Debbie.

When I Amtraked home to my boyfriend that spring I told him about the epic Barbacoa quesadilla. He began to make them for me.

The first super quesadilla my boyfriend made me involved a disassembled taco from a local drive-through with the meat liberally applied to a flour

tortilla filled with cotija cheese, green sauce and avocado. Heaven. He fried up one for each of us and sliced them in half. I ate the thick wedge with gusto.

So it began. Another morning, *Another Breakfast with You* as Ladytron sings. My boyfriend wakes me with fresh ground coffee. He makes super quesadillas with leftover steak from a BBQ, cotija cheese, green sauce and avocado. I eat hungrily from a blue Fiesta Ware plate.

*Another Breakfast with You.* My boyfriend substitutes stir-fried Turkey meat for the steak. We sit across from each other at the mid-century wood table in his Mount Washington home. The dogs snorfle softly at my feet.

*Another Breakfast with You.* My boyfriend lays a single strip of turkey bacon upon the cheese, pours two thin lines of green taco sauce. Folds the tortilla with a spatula. Perfect grill lines from the grill pan on the tortilla and on the extra strip of bacon that I eat following the quesadilla.

"Bacon-a-dilla, what's not to like?" I say and subsequently tweet because I think I'm so clever. The bacon-a-dilla is the most perfect fat to love. The union of masculine affinity for bacon with delicious Bay Area super quesadilla goodness. I love my boyfriend's super quesadillas and look forward to many more.

"Why don't you ever make me breakfast?" my boyfriend asks me one morning.

"Why don't you ever come over?" I respond. "If you do, I'll make you waffles. Super blackberry waffles." I smile at him adoringly. The dogs snorfle at my feet. Quesadillas fry.