



### **Fancy Tuna Melts**

*Fresh, Fast, and Zesty; Adapted for the Home Cook*

- 4 ounces sharp white cheddar cheese, cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 2 ounces (about 8) pimento-stuffed green olives, thinly sliced into rounds
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 3 Tablespoons plain Greek yogurt
- 1 Tablespoon finely chopped fresh fennel, plus fronds for garnish
- 1/3 cup (about 8) cornichons (pickles), finely chopped
- 1 large rib celery, finely chopped
- 2 green onions or scallions, thinly sliced
- 2 (4-ounce) cans tuna in oil, drained but save oil
- 1 Tablespoon cornichon (pickle) juice if needed
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt and 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- hot sauce as desired
- 6 (5-1/2-inch) hot dog buns, split on top
- Garnish: 1 green onion, finely chopped; 2 radishes, thinly sliced; fronds from fennel; edible flowers as desired

- Heat the oven to 375°F. Raise oven rack one level higher.
- In a medium bowl, mix the cheese, olives, mayonnaise, yogurt, fennel, cornichons, celery, finely chopped green onions, and drained tuna. If it appears a little dry; add 1 Tablespoon cornichon (pickle) juice. Season with salt and pepper, as well as the hot sauce, and divide among the hot dog buns. Drizzle some tuna oil over the tuna filling.
- Wrap each individually in aluminum foil; place on a baking sheet. Bake for about 20 minutes or cheese looks melted.
- Carefully open the foil packets (or remove foil entirely) and bake for 5 more minutes to crisp the buns. Do not overcook.
- Unwrap fully, garnish generously with finely chopped green onions, thinly sliced radishes, fennel fronds, and edible flowers for that fancy spring touch. Serve warm.

**Servings:** 6, Prep time: 15 minutes Total time: 40 minutes

**GG Note:** I swapped in Greek yogurt for part of the mayonnaise as a lighter, tangier, healthy upgrade, I also added sharp cheese and a shorter baking time for a juicier sandwich. It was fun to add a fancy twist to a plain tuna sandwich.

**Adapted from:** 2019 Vice recipe where Chef Erik Anderson (French Laundry, Coi, and now Ilora) Chef Eric Anderson's childhood recipe – most of the recipe is true to his mother's tuna recipe but as you might guess, she didn't add all that fancy garnish.

**About the Recipe:** Fancy tuna melts elevate the classic sandwich by blending aged cheddar cheese, olives, mayonnaise, yogurt, fennel, pickles, celery, scallions, and tuna, all seasoned with salt, pepper, and a touch of hot sauce. The mixture is stuffed into top-slit, hot dog buns, wrapped in foil, and baked until warm and melty; then garnished with chopped fronds, sliced green onions, radishes, and even edible flowers for an elegant finish. Plain Greek yogurt was added as a healthier twist, giving the tuna melt a creamy, tangy flavor profile that's both fresh and zesty. It's a fast, fresh, and zesty lunch or snack.

**For Your Information:** Scallions, also known as green onions or spring onions, are a type of onion with a mild flavor and long, slender green stalks. Both the white base and green tops are edible, making them a versatile ingredient for garnishes, salads, and cooked dishes.