Sandwiches

SANDWICHES are portable meals: gyro, wrap, muffuletta, po-boy, Panini, Monte Cristo, Philly Cheese Steak Grinder, bacon cheeseburger, and canapé. Restaurants and family kitchens produce lots of sandwiches each year; they are a staple for eating in and for eating out. How did these sandwiches evolve? Who was the Earl of Sandwich? Read on.



Objective:

Analyze sandwich components, categories, and specialty types.

Key Terms:

bread
canapé
cold sandwiches
Cubano
filling
garnish
gyro
hot sandwiches
Monte Cristo
muffuletta
multi-decker sandwich
open-face sandwich
Panini
po-boy
portion control devices
Pullman loaf
sandwich
sandwich station
spreads
tea sandwich
tzatziki
wrap

Sandwich Components, Categories, and Types

According to the *Dictionary of Gastronomy*, a **sandwich** is a piece of meat or other food (cooked or uncooked) pressed between two slices of buttered bread. Before the Earl of Sandwich, sandwiches were described as "bread and meat" or "bread and cheese." The origin and namesake of the sandwich is said to be John Montagu, Lord of Sandwich. Legend has it that the Montagu was a gambler who hated to leave the gaming tables. Apparently, his chef designed the first sandwich so Montagu could eat at the table. Sandwiches come in two main

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categories: cold and hot. They run the gamut from dainty tea types (cold) to "knife-and-fork" main meal (hot) varieties.

COMPONENTS

All sandwiches have four main components (though all four may not always be used): bread, spread, filling, and garnish.

Bread

Bread is the "packaging" that holds the sandwich together; makes it easy to eat; and adds flavor, texture, and nutrients. For sandwiches, bread is typically fine textured for ease of handling and for ease of making crisp cuts. Bread provides a chef or a cook with an opportunity to be creative because of its variety and endless shapes, textures, and flavors. Some examples are flatbreads—tortilla wraps; stuffed sandwich breads—pita, croissant, ciabatta, focaccia, and baguettes; crackers and matzo; rolls, buns, English muffins, and bagels; trimmed and cut or sliced cocktail loaves; and sliced sandwich loaves, including the **Pullman loaf**—a square-cornered rectangle without the typical white bread "crown" that provides perfectly square slices.

Spreads

Spreads are soft and malleable coatings that cover the surface of bread, adding flavor and moisture to a sandwich. Spreads include butter, mayonnaise, salad dressings (e.g., oil and vinegar, Miracle Whip, Thousand Island, French, bleu cheese, and Green Goddess), condiments (e.g., ketchup, mustard, and relish), and specialty spreads (e.g., hummus, guacamole, and cream cheese mixtures). Another purpose of a spread is to keep the bread from becoming soggy by shielding it from direct contact with the other sandwich ingredients. For example, egg salad and tuna salad would easily seep into the bread and make the sandwich more difficult to handle. Spreads that prevent soggy bread are usually high in fat, such as butter and margarine. Spreads include nut, fruit, wine, and honey butters; jellies and jams; tapenade; horseradish and



BROADENING AWARENESS...

AMAZING ASPECTS: Pullman Bread

The creation of Pullman bread is credited to the Pullman Company of Chicago, IL—famous for the Pullman railway cars that offered sleeper cars and fine dining on their trains. Known for fine cuisine cooked on the train, the Pullman Company developed square loaf pans with a lid so as the bread rose, it would not crown. Instead, it remained perfectly square. The result was being able to bake three loaves in an oven that normally held two loaves. With very tight space restrictions on railcars, the new loaf pan became the rage on trains and later in grocery stores. Now the term "Pullman" commonly refers to things long and narrow (e.g., Pullman luggage, Pullman toasters, and Pullman beds).

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horseradish sauce; garlic mayonnaise; marmalade; chutney; barbeque sauce; honey mustard or vinaigrette dressing; pesto sauce; tartar sauce; and salsa.

Filling

The **filling** of a sandwich is the primary ingredient, providing the key flavor, nutrients (typically protein), and often the sandwich name. Fillings are numerous, including sliced meats and cheeses; mixture salads (e.g., tuna or egg); whole pieces of chicken, fish fillets, sausages, or burgers; and "meaty" vegetables (e.g., portabella mushrooms and eggplant) and other sautéed vegetables. Other fillings include peanut and other nut butters; meatloaf and meatballs; fried eggs; and lobster and other seafood.

Garnish

A **garnish** is one or more items added to improve flavor and appearance. Garnishes for sandwiches can be on the sandwich (e.g., lettuce, tomato, sprouts, or other cooked or raw vegetables) or served as a side accompaniment (e.g., pickle spear, pepperoncini, dipping sauce, or coleslaw). Aside from adding flavor, embellishment, and variety to the sandwich, garnishes add color, texture, and nutrients.

SANDWICH STATION AND TECHNIQUES

To be efficient and to control costs, many restaurants employ specific strategies, such as stations (e.g., sandwich station) and portion control devices. If the equipment is set up properly, it enables employees to be more efficient in preparing ordered items.

Sandwich Station

A **sandwich station** is an area of the kitchen specifically set up for bulk preparation of sandwiches. The ways in which to prepare sandwiches are almost as varied as the ingredients. A sandwich station should be well-organized, with the required tools and equipment, prepared ingredients, plates or baskets, liners, garnishes, and any other items to prepare and plate sandwich orders readily at hand.

Portion Control Devices

Portion control devices are tools and equipment that ensure all servings are the same size. Devices include balance and electronic scales,



FIGURE 1. Scales and scoops are typical portion control devices at a sandwich station.

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scoops, ladles, pre-portioned units (e.g., cups for soup, French fry packages, and pre-portioned cracker packages), and any other proprietary tool or device to keep all servings the same size. Portion control devices ensure that every sandwich has the same quantity of each component as every other sandwich of its kind. Franchise restaurants are moneymakers because the portions, regardless of location, remain exactly the same. Portion control is the first line of defense in cost control.

Equipment

The sandwich station set up will mirror the variety of sandwiches offered on the menu, specifically as it relates to the category of sandwich served. Typical tools and equipment for all sandwich stations are stainless steel or other worktables, portion control tools and equipment, gloves, cutting boards, knives (paring, serrated, slicer, chef) and sandwich spreaders, tongs, a sink and a closely located hand-washing station, rubber scrapers, various spoons and forks, close access to ice and refrigeration, and close access to heat sources.

Assembly

To assemble large quantities of cold sandwiches, a typical process would be to place sandwich bread or rolls heel-to-heel on a cutting board (i.e., all the "tops" in one row and all the "bottoms" in another row); place spread just to the edges of the crust of each slice of bread using a sandwich knife (short oval knife with a rounded end and serrated on one side); add garnish (lettuce, tomato, onion, pickle) to the "bottoms" of all sandwiches; portion the filling onto the "bottoms" (meat, cheese, salad) using a set amount (4 ounces, No. 8 scoop, etc.); and place "top" onto the "bottom." Then slice, plate, and serve.

CATEGORIES

Cold sandwiches are sandwiches prepared and served with chilled ingredients, even if the filling or other elements were cooked earlier. Cold sandwiches are served cold, and they require adequate refrigeration space at the station, but no cooking equipment is needed. Some "cold" sandwiches are fully acceptable at room temperature, with the term "cold" reflecting that the sandwich would not be served hot.

Hot sandwiches are reheated sandwiches or fillings cooked from a raw state and served hot. Typically, the bread and the filling are heated through various methods, though only the filling is required to be served hot. The equipment needed at a hot sandwich station is always more involved than a cold station and may include flattop grills, microwave, deep fryer, Panini press, and oven.

CATEGORY TYPES

Cold Sandwiches

Traditional cold sandwiches, typically on sandwich bread or a hard roll, are simple. They often use common ingredients, such as peanut butter and jelly; luncheon meats (e.g., deli ham,

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bologna, or turkey); cheese; salad-type fillings (e.g., egg, tuna, and chicken); and a submarine or hoagie roll.

Tea Sandwich

A **tea sandwich** is a small, dainty, bite-size sandwich made on white bread or similar tender bread that always has the crust trimmed. At least two tea sandwiches could be cut from a slice of sandwich bread. The shapes vary widely. The filling is minimal and is exceptionally tender. For instance, finely chopped egg, tuna, or chicken for a salad-type filling or paper-thin slices of cucumber or watercress leaves are common. A tea sandwich is designed as a mid-day snack, historically served at formal "teas" to high-society ladies of the late 1800s. Now tea sandwiches are served at high-end hotels, resorts, and country clubs where the tradition of mid-day tea lives on. Examples from Martha Stewart and Ina Garten (The Barefoot Contessa) include prosciutto and cucumber spread with chive butter; pinwheel sandwiches with egg salad and chicken salad; smoked salmon on buttered whole grain bread; and bacon and arugula with mushroom butter.



FIGURE 2. Tea sandwiches are small. They may be cut in any shape and always have crusts removed.

Canapé

A **canapé** is a bite-size, open-face sandwich that has a food item spread or placed on an edible base (usually bread). It is elegant in appearance and can be consumed easily while socializing. A canapé often is highly decorative, easy to eat with one hand, and enough for one bite. It may be topped with aspic or piped with flavored butter or mayonnaise. A canapé is usually served with cocktails and/or at buffets.

- The base may include Pullman loaf, black, or pumpernickel bread; sweet nut bread; a cracker; a crouton; half of a hard-cooked egg white; or a pastry shell.



FIGURE 3. Canapés are small, elegant, one-bite tidbits.

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- The spread or topping may include caviar, shallot butter, pesto butter, nut butter, pate, lettuce circle with tomato butter, curried cream cheese, ham spread, and/or soft cheese.
- The garnish may include a piped cream cheese border, a pimiento, green onion rounds, smoked oyster, radish roses, fresh dill, capers, and/or chopped parsley.

Wrap

A **wrap** is a flatbread (e.g., tortilla, pita, naan, spring roll wrapper, crêpe, or butterhead lettuce leaf) sandwich filled with spreads or sliced meats and vegetables that are folded or rolled up for service. It can be served hot, but it is commonly served cold as a whole wrap or sliced as a canapé. A wrap is typically a "light" entrée sandwich because of the thin nature of flatbread compared to buns, rolls, and thicker cuts of bread. Classic flatbread sandwiches are gyros (Greek), crêpes (French), spring rolls (Vietnamese), sushi rolls (Japanese), moo shu (Chinese), tacos and burritos (Mexican; served hot or cold), and fajitas (Mexican; typically served hot).

Muffuletta

The **muffuletta** (moof-fuh-LEHT-tuh) is a sandwich served at room temperature. This Sicilian-style sandwich was created in New Orleans at the Central Grocery Company in the early 1900s. It is created on a round loaf of muffuletta bread filled with Italian salami, mortadella, and capicola meats; provolone cheese; olive salad; and freshly minced garlic. Today, some New Orleans restaurants serve a hot version and a vegetarian version. Olive salad is the key ingredient and typically includes green and Kalamata olives, coarsely chopped; pimiento, coarsely chopped; garlic, minced; anchovy fillet, mashed; capers, drained and rinsed; fresh oregano leaves and parsley leaves; ground pepper; and extra-virgin olive oil.

Hot Sandwiches: Fried, Grilled, Pressed, and Knife-and-Fork

Hot sandwiches may vary in caloric content, appearance, and time in preparation as much as in content.

Fried Sandwiches

Fried sandwiches may be pan- or deep-fried. Generally, fried sandwiches are made with nearly any variety of bread, though sandwich-style bread is typical. The final product is a browned, crispy appearance, similar to that of any other fried product. Lean meats and cheeses are examples of fillings suited for frying. The classic fried sandwich is a **Monte Cristo**, which is a grilled or deep-fried sandwich filled with sliced turkey, ham, and Swiss cheese. It is served with raspberry preserves. Some think the Monte Cristo looks similar to "a French toast sandwich."

Pressed Sandwiches

Panini ("little sandwiches" in Italian) are sandwiches grilled on a "press" or "closed grill" in which heat is applied on both sides of the sandwich at the same time until the bread is crisp and the filling is warmed—toasted and showing "grill marks." Filling options are endless (e.g.,

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turkey, salami, prosciutto, pesto, ham, and mushrooms). However, cheese is a common element. They are often somewhat flat in appearance after being compressed in the closed grill. Ciabatta bread is commonly used.



FIGURE 4. Panini are grilled sandwiches made on a hot "press" that grills both sides at once and tends to flatten the sandwich.

Grilled Sandwiches

Simple grilled sandwiches are cooked on a flattop grill as a whole sandwich and are flipped to grill both sides of the bread (e.g., grilled cheese, Reuben, and patty melt). The filling may or may not be precooked before grilling the sandwich. A patty melt is a good example of a grilled sandwich in which the "filling" has been cooked prior to grilling, whereas a grilled cheese sandwich is cooked directly on the grill from a completely cold state. A **Cubano** is a sandwich grilled in a press until the meats and pickles have warmed. These Cuban favorites are loaded with ham, pork, cheese, pickles, and butter or mustard. The bread is the most important part. Typically, the bread has a trademark split or gash down the center of the crust; the bread is crusty but tender.



FIGURE 5. A grilled Cubano sandwich is constructed of ham, pork, pickles, mustard, and cheese.

Hot Sandwiches

Hot sandwiches are most sandwiches in which the filling (and commonly the bread, but that is optional) is served hot. This ranges from a simple hot dog or hamburger to a French Dip beef sandwich to the classic "hot beef or turkey sandwich" to the Philly Steak Grinder.

- An **open-face sandwich** is a sandwich in which there is bread below the filling, not on top of it. The sandwich is usually served with mashed potatoes, stuffing, and gravy. This type of open-face sandwich is often termed a "knife-and-fork" sandwich (e.g., hot turkey sandwich, hot beef sandwich, or hot pork sandwich).

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DIGGING DEEPER...

UNCOVERING ADDITIONAL FACTS: Becoming a Sandwich Giant

Many people dream of owning their own restaurant. Culinary students often see themselves as creating a high-end dream restaurant, earning fame, and becoming wealthy with elegant new creations. However, creating famous businesses based on sandwiches is statistically more likely, requires less start-up money, is easier to develop, requires less training, and is far more profitable. Research business creators such as Ray Kroc (McDonalds), Dave Thomas (Wendy's), Fred DeLuca and Peter Buck (Subway), Billy Ingram and Walter Anderson (White Castle), and Jimmy John Liautaud (Jimmy John's). They are all entrepreneurs who became millionaires by focusing on creating a sandwich that was delicious, easy to prepare, had minimal food costs with room for great profits, and provided the opportunity to develop a theme around the concept.

Prior to opening their businesses, these and other sandwich giants had in common strong work ethics, original ideas, a "feel" for what the public wanted, and a strong belief in themselves and their products, not advanced degrees or inherited wealth. Starting a business today is a bit more complex, but these elements remain the same. Do some research about other "sandwich giants," and continue to connect the dots on your way to fast food and the fast track.

- **Po-boy** (shortened from poor boy; a very inexpensive lunch option) is a sandwich staple in New Orleans at lunch counters. A high-quality French bread is the first step in making a true po-boy sandwich; most are about 3 inches long and 3 to 4 inches wide. It is eaten "dressed" (with lettuce, tomato, pickles, mayonnaise, butter, ketchup, and Creole mustard) or with "nuttin" on. The filling can be almost anything you imagine. New Orleans favorites are fried shrimp, crawfish, or oysters; French fries and gravy; roast beef or ham; hamburger or cheeseburger; and fried catfish.
- A **gyro** (YEER-oh) is a sandwich of Greek origin and consists of various rotisserie meats (e.g., lamb, beef, pork, and chicken; usually a mixture of beef and lamb pressed into a cone shape), tomatoes, lettuce, onions, and tzatziki on a toasted pita. **Tzatziki** (tsah-ZEE-kee) sauce is a mixture of yogurt, diced cucumber, dill, and vinegar. The rotisserie meat is shaved from the cone-shaped rotisserie and is briefly toasted on the grill.
- A **multi-decker sandwich** is a sandwich typically served hot (some are served cold) and includes at least three pieces of toasted bread. One slice typically separates the various layers of sandwich



FIGURE 6. A chicken club sandwich is a classic multi-decker type.

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fillings. Spreads and garnishes are commonly used on each layer. Big Macs and club sandwiches are classic examples.

Summary:



Sandwiches are portable meals of the modern era, made easy to eat with bread as the filing holder, and enhanced with spreads and garnishes. Hot and cold sandwich varieties are endless, from simple to elaborate and from one-bite canapés to knife-and-fork style meals. Regardless of the type, you need an organized and designed sandwich station for the commercial production of sandwiches.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. What are the four components of a sandwich?
2. What type of sandwich is a Monte Cristo?
3. Describe a tea sandwich.
4. List 10 essential sandwich station tools and equipment.
5. How is a panini different from a grilled sandwich?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Many people see sandwiches as an American staple, with an immediate mental image of two slices of bread and a filling. Further examination reveals that sandwiches are a part of all cultures and can take the shape of pizza, tacos, and tostadas; the Jbarito from Puerto Rico; and falafel from the Middle East. Do some research to learn about international sandwiches.

Web Links:



Food Timeline
http://www.foodtimeline.org/foodsandwiches.html

Sandwich Breads
http://www.kraftrecipes.com/recipes/sandwich/breads.aspx

International Sandwiches
http://news.travel.aol.com/2011/04/21/sandwiches-around-the-world-10-international-bites-on-a-bun/

Sandwich Recipes
http://whatscookingamerica.net/Sandwich.htm

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