

Local HERO

Amp up the party at your next gathering with these superdelicious, supersize sandwiches. Five chefs from across the nation share their inspired recipes for feeding a crowd.

TEXT BY NANCY DURAN

GRINDERS. SUBS. HOAGIES. HEROES. Call them what you will. Any way you slice it, sandwiches are the perfect party food. For starters, they can be eaten with one hand (while the other holds a drink). They're also remarkably simple to prep for a crowd. Most of them can be eaten at room temperature, and the individual elements that go into a sandwich can usually be made well in advance of a party so there's no last-minute scrambling necessary to pull them together.

Take a road trip through the next few pages to discover classic sandwiches reimaged by five inspired chefs from around the United States. Each of these heroes says a little bit about the diversity of this great country. From a twist on the Vietnamese banh mi from Gabriel Pascuzzi of Portland, Oregon (a city that boasts a burgeoning Vietnamese community), to Miami chef Michelle Bernstein's delicioso Cubano, these five brilliant creations elevate the humble sandwich to hallowed hero.



vegetarian reubens

You won't miss the meat in these vegetarian sandwiches. Pastrami-spiced roasted mushrooms and garlicky spinach are layered with Emmentaler cheese, rye-flavored sauerkraut, and a creamy Greek yogurt Russian sauce for an unforgettable sandwich that even meat eaters will adore. **Serves 10**

FOR THE RUSSIAN YOGURT SAUCE

- 1½ cups whole-milk Greek yogurt
- ½ cup finely chopped shallot (about 1 large shallot), rinsed in cold water and well drained
- ½ cup bread-and-butter pickles, well drained and finely chopped
- ½ cup ketchup
- 1 tsp. vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 tsp. hot sauce, such as Cholula
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE MUSHROOMS AND SPINACH

- 2 tsp. coriander seeds
- 2 tsp. yellow mustard seeds
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 tsp. granulated garlic

- 1 packed tsp. light brown sugar
- 2 lb. sliced cremini mushrooms
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbs. vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
- 6 Tbs. olive oil
- 2 large cloves garlic, lightly crushed
- 10 oz. baby spinach (8½ tightly packed cups)

FOR THE SANDWICHES

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1¼ cups drained prepared sauerkraut
- 1 tsp. caraway seeds
- 10 Portuguese rolls
- 4 oz. (8 Tbs.) unsalted butter, softened
- 20 1-oz. slices Emmentaler cheese
- Mushrooms and Spinach (at left)
- 1¼ cups Russian Yogurt Sauce (at left)

MAKE THE YOGURT SAUCE

In a small bowl, combine the yogurt, shallot, pickles, ketchup, Worcestershire, paprika, and hot sauce. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside until needed, or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

MAKE THE MUSHROOMS AND SPINACH

Position a rack in the center of the oven, and heat the oven to 400°F. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with parchment.

Toast the coriander and mustard seeds in a small skillet over medium heat, stirring often, until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a spice grinder and let cool. Add the smoked paprika, granulated garlic, and sugar. Grind until the whole spices are cracked and coarsely ground. (Alternatively, grind in a mortar and pestle.)

Put the mushrooms in a large bowl, and sprinkle all over with the spice mixture. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and toss with the Worcestershire and 4 Tbs. of the oil. Spread the mushrooms on the prepared baking sheets. Roast until the mushrooms are



caramelized and all of the liquid has evaporated, switching the pan positions and stirring halfway through, about 25 minutes total. Transfer to a large bowl.

Meanwhile, put the remaining 2 Tbs. oil and the garlic cloves in a large nonstick skillet. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring often, until the garlic is golden and fragrant, 3 to 4 minutes. Discard the garlic, and add the spinach. Season with salt and pepper. Cook in batches, tossing occasionally, until the spinach is wilted. Continue cooking, stirring often, until all of the liquid has evaporated and the spinach has darkened, 4 to 5 minutes total. Transfer the spinach to the bowl with the mushrooms, and toss to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper. If making ahead, store the mushrooms and spinach in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 day.

MAKE THE SANDWICHES

Position a rack in the upper third of the oven, and set the oven to broil, and position a rack in the upper third of the oven. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with foil, and coat them lightly with cooking spray.

In a medium bowl, stir together the sauerkraut and caraway seeds.

Split the rolls in half horizontally, keeping them attached on one end so that they open like a book. Spread butter on the outside

of each roll. Put the rolls, opened, on the prepared baking sheets. Place a slice of cheese on each roll. Divide the mushroom and spinach mixture among the rolls. Spoon about 2 Tbs. of sauerkraut on each sandwich, followed by about 2 Tbs. of the yogurt sauce (you won't need all the sauce). Top each sandwich with another piece of cheese, and then close the rolls. Press down on each sandwich with the palm of your hand. (The sandwiches can be prepared to this point, and then wrapped in plastic. Store in the refrigerator for up to 1 day.)

Slide one pan into the oven on the prepared rack. Broil the sandwiches until golden and toasted, rotating the pan halfway through, about 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven, flip the sandwiches over, press down with a spatula, then continue broiling until the bread is toasted on the other side and the cheese has melted, about 3 minutes longer. Repeat with the second pan of sandwiches. Cut the sandwiches in half, and serve with the remaining sauce on the side.



HOMETOWN HERO Nicki Sizemore

Author of *Fresh Flavors for the Slow Cooker: Reinvent the Slow Cooked Meal* (Storey Publishing, 2019) and *Build-a-Bowl* (Storey Publishing, 2018).

Sizemore publishes the popular blog *FromScratchFast.com*, where she features wholesome, gluten-free, flavor-packed recipes that can be made from scratch in under an hour.