

Top 5 sandwiches in San Diego

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I pounded through a carb-and-protein regimen for more than a month, searching for the perfect balance of bread, filling and flavor in San Diego. It's a quest dubbed Project Sandwich 2013.

Quickly, I realized there are too many things to stuff between slices of bread — from Muffalettas and patty melts to tortas and BLTs, sandwiches are as diverse as the bird kingdom.

So I limited the hunt to five types of sandwiches decided by an online U-T reader poll. [See that poll, which decided the five category of sandwiches selected.](#)

And here's my so-good-I-fantasize-about-them list, a handheld quintet that covers American classics and one French-Vietnamese hoagie. Plan your lunches and Super Bowl catered eats accordingly.



The Almost Grilled Cheese Sandwich at Con Pane Rustic Breads & Cafe in Point Loma is oven-roasted (not grilled). — *Eduardo Contreras*

The Almost Grilled Cheese Sandwich

Con Pane Rustic Breads & Cafe

2750 Dewey Road No. 105, Liberty Station, Point Loma. (619) 224-4344. Closed Wednesdays.

Funky, triple-cream French Brie has found its match with assertive Gorgonzola. They oven-roast together on handmade rosemary-and-olive-oil bread. Recommended for a true lover of deliciously moldy butterfat and fluffy baked goods, this sandwich is like a fondue party on an artisanal cloud. A half Almost Grilled is \$4.45; whole \$7.15. Add Roma tomatoes if you want to cut the richness of the cheese. For the game-day gourmet: Con Pane is chiefly a bakery. Get baguettes, loaves or sourdough bread bowls for your Super Bowl soups here.



The grilled pork Bánh Mì is just \$2.85, fresh-made and pretty great at K Sandwiches. — *Eduardo Contreras*

Bánh Mì Thit Nuong — The No. 9

K Sandwiches

7604 Linda Vista Road, Clairemont. (858) 278-8961 or ksandwiches.com

Grilled sweet pork, cilantro, pickled carrot and daikon spears, jalapeños and house-made mayonnaise covering a French baguette, K's No. 9 is the most ornate sandwich on this list. It's priced for teenagers at \$2.85, adult-sized at 10 inches. This family-run cafe has an on-site bakery, giving it a crunchy-chewy carb edge over most Bánh Mì makers. K Sandwiches accepts large orders.



the Cheesesteak sandwich at Alex's Brown Bag in Pacific Beach. — *Eduardo Contreras*

Cheesesteak

Alex's Brown Bag

Inside Latitude 32 bar, 5019 Cass St., Pacific Beach. (858) 273-0502 or alexsbrownbag.com

A way to get a more authentic cheesesteak is to have your beef and Amoroso's bread rolls FedExed from Philadelphia. Which is what the owner of Alex's Brown Bag does already, so head to the backroom of this sports bar for Philly's mascot, the cheesesteak. It's a juicy half-pound of peppery steak plus a light mix of grilled onions, green bell peppers and mushrooms. (6-inch for \$5.25; 12-inch for \$8.95) Yes, this is the Alex's formerly housed in Bankers Hill's Fifth [Avenue Financial Center](#).



The brisket sandwich at Coop's West Texas BBQ (locations in Lemon Grove and Chula Vista). — *Eduardo Contreras*

Barbecue Sandwich (and Pulled Pork)

Coop's West Texas BBQ

2625 Lemon Grove Ave., Lemon Grove. (619) 589-0478 or coopsbbq.com. Closed Mondays.

534 Broadway, Chula Vista. (619) 476-2203 or coopsbbq.com. Closed Mondays.

Brad Cooper rubs, smokes and shreds his way into the hearts of barbecue fanatics. He's from a cattle-shipping and oil boom city in Texas. Fittingly, his Big Boy brisket sandwich (\$9, with a side) is a French roll erupting with pencil-thick, tender fragments of lean and fatty meat. The \$6 Small Boy sandwich is tamped into a hamburger bun. Both sites cater.

Chris Ello's Pulled Pork Sandwich

Cali Comfort BBQ Restaurant & Sports Bar

8910 Troy St., Spring Valley. (619) 337-0670 or calicomfortsd.com

Bring this \$9.99 sandwich to your face and 6 ounces of pulled pork will attempt a potato-bun break. Chase those sweet pork slivers, some crisped-to-mellow bacon after 12 hours in that hickory smoker out front. Even without the luscious barbecue sauce in a side container, this sandwich, named after a local sports radio host, performs admirably. Any foodie with an appreciation for cured, smoked pork butt will appreciate its salt-forward seasoning. From racks of ribs to

tri tip and brisket, Cali BBQ caters. And as a sports bar, it expects a full house Sunday.

What is one of your Top 5 sandwiches? Comment below.

The famous handheld snack is named after the fourth earl of sandwich, who lived in 18th century England. His descendant, Orlando William Montagu, has started a chain of U.S. restaurants called, you guessed it, the Earl of Sandwich.

The back story on some popular sandwiches

Excerpted from San Diego-based food writer Susan Russo's 2010 book "The Encyclopedia of Sandwiches: Recipes, History, and Trivia for Everything Between Sliced Bread"

Bánh Mì: Pronounced "BUN-mee," the Bánh Mì may be the greatest fusion sandwich. It originated in Vietnam during French occupation. ... Bánh Mì were introduced to North America by Vietnamese immigrants in the wake of the [Vietnam War](#).

Reuben: This beauty consists of hot slices of corned beef topped with sauerkraut, Swiss cheese and Russian or Thousand Island dressing, all nestled between two slices of rye bread.

Pulled Pork: It's a type of barbecue: pork butt (the pig's shoulder) cooked slowly over low heat until tender enough to be pulled into small pieces.

Philly cheesesteak: Order like a local, and keep it to three words. The first word is one, which means you're ordering one sandwich. The second indicates the type of cheese you want. And the third is either wit or witout, which indicates your preference for fried onions. So 'one, Whiz, wit' is a cheesesteak with Cheez Whiz and fried onions.