

Sandwiches with a

PUNCH

THE FOUR STAGE STRUCTURE OF A SANDWICH

by John Fairchild

The NPD (a consumer research group) announced that sandwiches are now the number one dinner entrées eaten at home. Over eleven percent of dinners and thirty six percent of lunches, eaten in the home, features a sandwich. Lunch sandwich numbers have steadily declined in the last decade.



Our busy lifestyles and longer workdays have a big part in controlling our food choices. Less time between meetings and appointments, to prepare food, shop for fresh ingredients, and the convenience of quick-stop businesses have given sandwiches a frequent place at our dinner tables. With statistics showing a drop in families gathering together at the dinner table, it is likely the sandwich never makes it to the table. It tends to wind up next to the computer or on the couch in front of the television.

Everything we do in life is important and we have to place our fitness and health needs as a top priority. Errands, meetings, phone calls, appointments, staying current on world events, helping others, cleaning, wash, etc., need to be done and we tend to put health in the bottom bracket. Robert Kiyosaki says, "Pay yourself first." We begin to realize that if you don't place your health as a top priority, it is much harder to accomplish the things in life you aspire to achieve.

NPD recently asked over 50,000 people who prepared meals at home what prompts them to make the choices they do for dinner. Some of the top responses were as follows:

1. Little effort and easy to put together = 53%
2. Little planning = 50%
3. Foods that are on hand-around the house = 39%
4. Pleasing all taste buds in the house = 35%
5. Easy clean up = 34%

How do we use the convenience of the sandwich to work for us in benefiting our health goals? The following is the template to build a super sandwich, which will provide ideas for fiber, lean protein, healthy fats, vitamins, taste and diversity.

1. BREADS:

Look for 100% whole grains and lots of fiber. Some light breads pack a nutritional victory. The bread idea goes beyond the sliced loaf. Look for pitas, tortillas (La Tortilla), and hard rolls where you can scoop out the inside to make an excellent pocket for your filling. A great idea is to fill a tortilla and grill it for a few minutes, which will make the tortilla a little crunchy.

2. SPREADS:

Forget the mayo. If you really have to try it, use Hellmann's Light

and use the smallest amount you can to tickle your taste buds. There are many varieties of mustards, vinegars, hot sauces, light salad dressings (Walden Farms has a calorie free line), salsa's, chutney's, sun-dried tomatoes, hummus or plain yogurt with fresh herbs. Light cream cheese with herbs, garlic, avocado, infused olive oil and your own bean paste will make for some great spreads.

3. LEAN PROTEINS:

Are you sick of grilled chicken? Try turkey, ham, Canadian bacon, turkey bacon, roast beef, tuna, shrimp, crab, salmon and yes peanut butter (but sparingly, and try Naturally More by the Peanut Snack Company). Three ounces of a lean protein is a great serving size for most people and forego the cheese, you won't miss it. If you must have it, use light Cabot, smoked Gouda or feta. You can get away with using less and still taste a lot of flavor.

4. VEGETABLES:

Here is a great way to make the Cancer Institute happy. Load up your body with beautiful nutrients. Olives, pickles, spinach, bok choy, grated carrots, sliced radishes, sweet/hot peppers, broccoli slaw, scallions, tomato (green or red), cucumbers, sprouts, mushrooms, zucchini, onions, asparagus, eggplant, and even squash are great choices. You can increase flavor by roasting some of these in garlic and oil and keeping them in the fridge for easy use.

The sandwich idea is great for all the aforementioned reasons. The combination of flavors are endless and fun to try. If we can't seem to control our busy schedules, we can still eat healthy with a little planning. Note that some of the ideas in this article will tend to be high in sodium and keep that in mind when preparing your super sandwich creation.



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