

Gourmet

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BOOK REVIEW

'WICHCRAFT

Every day 'wichcraft patrons across the country order upward of 5,000 sandwiches. What makes them so irresistible? A new cookbook reveals all. For videos, a forum, and more recipes (including a peanut butter and jelly exclusive), visit gourmet.com.



Superstar chef Tom Colicchio began his rise in the mid-'90s at Gramercy Tavern, in New York City, then moved on to build the Craft restaurant empire (Craft, Craftsteak, and Craftbar). In 2003, a storefront opened up next to Craftbar, and Sisha Ortuzar, one of Colicchio's longtime sous-chefs,

proposed selling sandwiches. (Ortuzar often made them for the staff meal.) A sandwich aficionado himself, Colicchio jumped at the idea and opened the first 'wichcraft later that year. Today, there are more than a dozen outposts in New York City, San Francisco, and Las Vegas, selling some 5,000 sandwiches a day.

That passion has now been translated into a new book, *'wichcraft: Craft a Sandwich into a Meal—and a Meal into a Sandwich* (Clarkson Potter; 208 pages; \$27.50). Here, Colicchio and Ortuzar provide the recipes for re-creating their extraordinary sandwiches at home. "Ask yourself," Colicchio writes. "Why is a sandwich made from Thanksgiving leftovers so good? Because everything in it was originally crafted for a great meal. The turkey is roasted for the table The gravy, the cranberries—it's all made from real food, and nothing is 'filler.'" Same goes for the steak sandwich (opposite), in which tender braised beef is paired with charred red onion, roasted red pepper, and a cloak of Gruyère. Granted, this sandwich takes about three hours to prepare, but it's worth it. Seriously.

This isn't to say that a sandwich must be demanding to be delicious. For instance, the Fried Eggs with Bacon, Gorgonzola, and Frisée, a play on salty, eggy, and vinegary flavors, is now a breakfast favorite that I can whip up in minutes. And the Roasted Shrimp Salad with Tomatoes and Olives is so refreshing, I'll be making it regularly this spring as a quick weeknight dinner (see recipes at gourmet.com). In addition to 58 of the best breakfast, cool, warm, and sweet sandwich recipes imaginable, this book gives plenty of tips—toast bread on one side only and place the toasted side on the inside of the sandwich to support the filling; leave poached chicken in liquid until it's ready to be used to lock in moisture. The result? The humble sandwich is humble no more. —Diane Abrams

RED WINE-BRAISED FLANK STEAK WITH ROASTED PEPPERS, ONIONS, AND GRUYÈRE

Wichcraft: Craft a Sandwich into a Meal—and a Meal into a Sandwich by Tom Colicchio

MAKES 4 SANDWICHES

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 pound flank steak
- 1 medium carrot, cut into large dice
- ½ white onion, cut into large dice
- 2 garlic cloves, quartered
- 2 to 3 cups red wine
- 2 large sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 large red onion, sliced crosswise into ¾-inch wheels
- 8 tablespoons Roasted Peppers (page 111)
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon sherry vinegar
- 4 ciabatta rolls
- 8 slices Gruyère cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Choose a heavy-bottomed ovenproof skillet or Dutch oven that's large enough for the flank steak to lie flat but is as snug as possible. Add 2 tablespoons of the oil to the skillet over high heat. Once the oil starts to smoke, add the meat and cook for 5 to 7 minutes on each side, until deep brown in color. Remove the meat from the skillet and set the meat aside.

Add the carrot and onion to the skillet, followed by the garlic. Sauté the vegetables over medium-high heat until they start to brown but are still firm. Add the red wine—enough to come three-fourths of the way up the side of the meat. Add the thyme and 1 teaspoon of the salt, cover the skillet, and transfer to the oven. Braise the meat for about 2½ hours, until the meat can be pulled apart with a fork. Transfer the meat to a plate to rest and cool.



Reserve and strain the pan juices and pour into a saucepan. Over medium-low heat, reduce the juices until thickened (it should coat the back of a spoon). With two forks, separate the meat into chunky strings and roughly cut them crosswise into 2- to 3-inch pieces. Place the meat in the pot with the reduced juices and coat well.

Brush the red onion with the remaining 1 tablespoon vegetable oil. In a grill pan or cast-iron skillet over high heat, grill the red onion (without separating into individual rings) until charred on the outside and slightly cooked on the inside. Place in a bowl and separate into rings. Add the peppers, olive oil, sherry vinegar, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt and mix well.

Slice the ciabatta rolls in half. Place 1 slice of cheese on the bottom and top halves. Arrange the meat on the bottom halves of the rolls and the onions and peppers on the top halves and place all the roll pieces in the 350°F oven. Remove once the cheese is melted. Close the sandwiches, cut into halves, and serve.

ROASTED PEPPERS

MAKES 1 TO 1½ CUPS

- 2 red bell peppers
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 8 basil leaves
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Char the peppers over an open flame (on the stove or a grill) until the skin is black but not brittle. Make sure to use as high a heat as possible. The skin should char without the peppers cooking for too long. Transfer the peppers to a bowl and cover with plastic wrap. The steam will help to loosen the skin. Once they are slightly cool, remove all the skin, seeds, and stems. The skin should come off easily. (Do not submerge the peppers in water as this would wash away the flavor. A little of the charred skin left on them is fine.) Slice the peppers lengthwise into strips about ¼ inch wide. In a bowl, mix the peppers with the garlic, rosemary, basil, and oil. Season well with salt and pepper. Use immediately or refrigerate for up to 1 week. 📌