

In the CLUB

Get to know a lunchtime legend: the club sandwich.

The late comedian Mitch Hedberg once summed up the appeal of the club sandwich in a famous line: “I order the club sandwich all the time and I’m not even a member, man. I don’t know how I get away with it.” The joke is funny because few foods are more commonplace than the club—you’re just as likely to find one at a diner as you are at a five-star hotel. But this wasn’t always the case: The club likely got its start at members-only social clubs in the late 1800s. After an appearance at the world’s fair in 1904, the “whole meal” sandwiches became popular in cookbooks and in restaurants across the country. Soon, hotels catering to Americans abroad added them to their menus, cementing the club sandwich as a room-service must-have. Here’s how to make a classic version at home.

—Francesca Cocchi

The Perfect Club Sandwich

RECIPE BY KHALIL HYMORE

BREAD

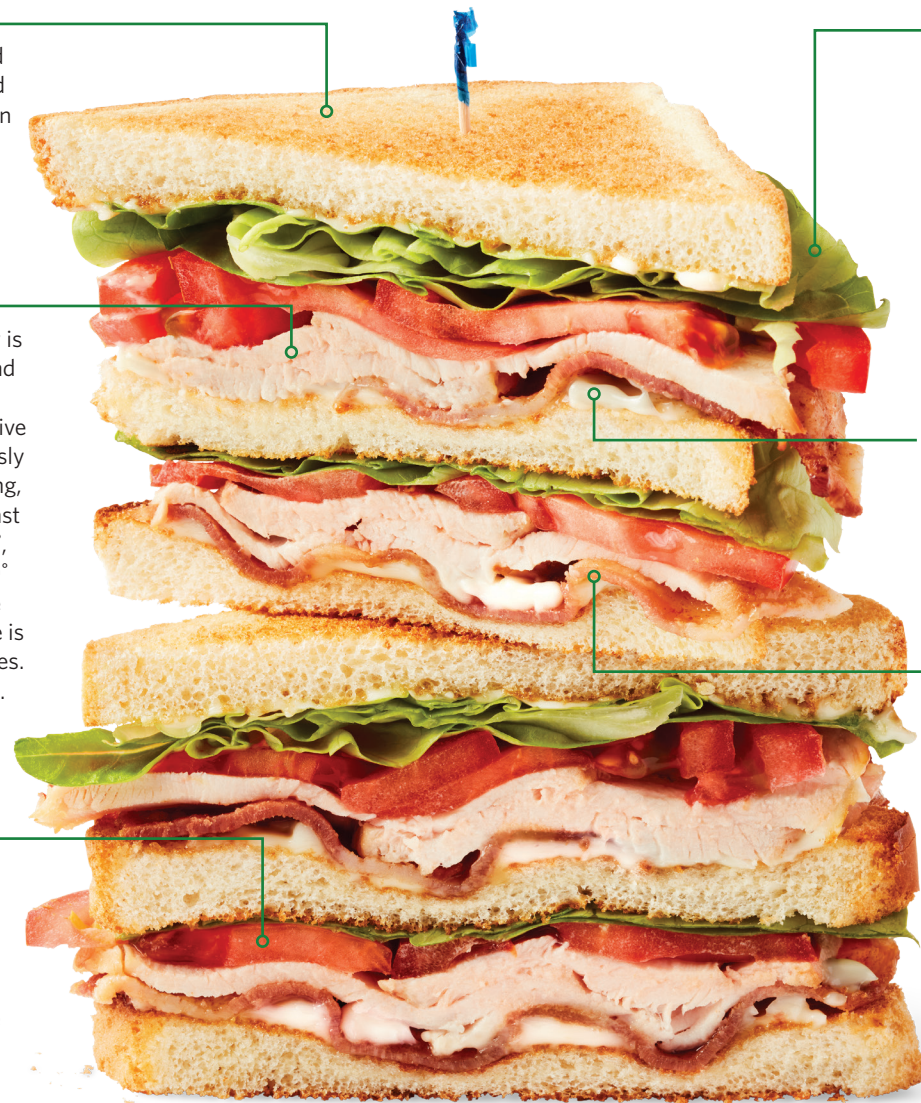
Use 3 slices of a good white sandwich bread (pain au lait or Pullman loaves are ideal). Be sure to toast it!

TURKEY

Fresh roasted turkey is key. Rub a 2¼-pound skinless, boneless turkey breast with olive oil; sprinkle generously with Italian seasoning, salt and pepper. Roast 10 minutes at 425°, then reduce to 350° and roast until the internal temperature is 160°, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool, then slice.

TOMATOES

Add 2 slices of tomato to each layer of a club; season with salt and pepper before you continue building the sandwich.



LETTUCE

Bibb and Boston lettuce both have nice small, soft leaves that fit well on the sandwich; shredded iceberg can be unruly.

MAYONNAISE

Spread a thick layer of mayo on each slice of toasted bread.

BACON

You’ll want 3 slices per sandwich (1½ slices in each layer). Halve the slices first, then cook in a skillet over medium heat until crisp.

Any Questions?

We’ve got answers!

WHO MADE THE FIRST CLUB?

The Saratoga Club House (now called Canfield Casino) in Saratoga Springs, NY, says it came up with the sandwich in 1894, but newspaper articles from the time reveal that the Union Club in New York City had been serving a version at least five years before.



WHAT’S WITH THE EXTRA BREAD?

The multitier construction was possibly inspired by double-decker train cars. But early recipes didn’t call for a third slice of bread in the middle, and some purists insist on leaving it out.



TURKEY OR CHICKEN?

One of the earliest printed club sandwich recipes, in the 1903 *Good Housekeeping Everyday Cook Book*, calls for “a slice of the white meat of either turkey or chicken.” More than 100 years later, the turkey-or-chicken debate is still going strong.



WHY SO PRICEY?

As they grew in popularity, club sandwiches became fixtures on menus at international hotels—and prices went through the roof. In 2012, hotels.com started publishing a Club Sandwich Index ranking the most expensive destinations based on the average price of a club sandwich. Paris topped the first-ever list, at \$33!



Ultimate Clubs



Mike’s Famous Duck Club

Tattooed Moose
Charleston, SC

This duck confit club earned high praise from Guy Fieri on *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives*. It’s served on three layers of sweet Hawaiian bread.



King of Clubs

The Brass Compass Cafe
Rockland, ME

Lynn Archer clinched a victory on *Throwdown with Bobby Flay* with her lobster club. The thick bread is made in-house, and every club contains a half pound of Maine lobster meat.



Chicken Katsu Club

Golden Diner
New York City

The Chinatown spot is known for creative twists on classic diner fare, like this mash-up of a Japanese katsu sando and a chicken club. It comes on milk bread.



Sunset Club

The Cabana Cafe at the Beverly Hills Hotel
Beverly Hills

Hotel guests have been dining on this knife-and-fork turkey club since 1940. The \$38 sandwich accounts for about a quarter of poolside sales!

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