

Southern Cubano

This sandwich delivers some of the most revered flavors of American Southern traditions in the style of the world-famous pressed Cubano sandwich. Chow chow is the ultimate pickle in many parts of the South, and usually made at the end of the harvest with whatever's left on the vines. And pimento cheese is practically a religious experience. Between two pieces of white bread, it's a legitimate meal. Our Cubano unites these two iconic flavors, then teams them with our mortadella on a soft roll, pressed and toasted into a melty, ridiculously satisfying sandwich. Sandwich lovers, we've got your number.

Ingredients

chow chow

- ¼ cup white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon mustard powder
- ¼ teaspoon celery seeds
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup finely diced green cabbage, from 2 large cabbage leaves
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper, finely diced, about ¼ whole red bell pepper
- ¼ red onion sliced thinly, about ¼ cup
- 1 small dill pickle, finely diced

sandwich

- 2 Cuban rolls or soft hero rolls
- ½ cup pimento cheese, about 1½ ounces
- 4 ounces deli ham, about 8 slices
- 4 ounces mortadella, about 6 slices
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted
- 4 teaspoons yellow mustard

Directions

for the chow chow

In a medium saucepan stir together the vinegar, sugar, mustard seeds, mustard powder, turmeric, celery seeds and salt, and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. When the brine simmers, add the vegetables. Cook until the vegetables soften and the liquid evaporates, stirring occasionally, about 6 minutes. Let cool.

assemble & cook sandwich

Slice the Cuban rolls in half horizontally and spread 1/4 cup of pimento cheese on the bottom half of each roll. Layer on half the ham and mortadella on each roll. Evenly divide the chow chow on the meat and spread 2 teaspoons of mustard on the top half of each roll.

Place a large skillet over medium-high heat and put the sandwiches in the dry pan. Brush them lightly with melted butter, then press them down with another large skillet. Cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes, then flip and press the other side until golden and pimento cheese is melted, about 2 minutes more. Slice on a bias and serve hot.

Cook's Notes:

Cuban bread is a soft white roll, very similar to hero or sub rolls, but baked in a slightly different method.

We use store-bought pimento cheese, which is readily available. You can make your own with a combination of grated cheddar cheese, cream cheese, mayonnaise, onion powder, cayenne and jarred pimentos.

total time: 40 minutes

active prep: 25 minutes

serves: 2

difficulty: easy