Focaccia Grinder Sandwich

Makes: 6 servings
Prep Time: 12 minutes Cook Time: 8 minutes
Total Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

The Sandwich:

- 1 loaf focaccia (roasted tomato and Parmesan focaccia is especially good)
- 1/4 cup pesto
- 2 ounces uncured Calabrese salami (about 8 slices)
- 2 ounces uncured capocollo (about 8 slices)
- 4 large slices provolone cheese

The Italian Salad:

- 1 head romaine lettuce, shredded (2-3 cups)
- 1/4 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup sliced pepperoncini
- 1/4-1/3 cup Italian dressing
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise, optional

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Keeping the focaccia flat on a cutting board, use a serrated knife to slice it horizontally in half. Carefully lift off the top half and set it aside.

Spread the pesto evenly over the cut side of the bottom half of the focaccia. Layer the salami and capocollo over the pesto, followed by the provolone slices.

Place the bottom half of the sandwich on a baking sheet and bake for 6-8 minutes, until the cheese is melted and the bread is lightly toasted. Keep the top half of the focaccia off the sandwich while it bakes.

Meanwhile, combine the shredded romaine, red onion, and pepperoncini in a large bowl. Add the Italian dressing and oregano, tossing until everything is lightly coated. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Remove the sandwich from the oven and pile the Italian salad evenly over the melted cheese. If using, spread the mayonnaise over the cut side of the top half of the focaccia.
Place the top half over the salad, gently press the sandwich together, and cut into wedges. Serve immediately while the bread is still warm and the cheese is gooey!

Chef's Notes:

- Focaccia: Roasted tomato and Parmesan focaccia is particularly delicious here, but plain focaccia works beautifully, too.
- Make ahead: You can prepare the individual components ahead of time, but wait to dress the lettuce until just before assembling. This keeps the salad crisp.
- Serving: This makes a wonderful lunch or casual dinner, and it's especially nice for sharing. Cut into smaller wedges for a party or larger pieces for a meal.
- Substitutions: Feel free to use another Italian deli meat in place of the salami or capocollo.