



Editorial: Are Burritos Sandwiches

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Answering the Question of our Age

The Sandwich, the culinary construct that changed the world. The Sandwich is a versatile vehicle for any chef's imaginative combinations.

A "sandwich" as defined by The Merriam Webster Dictionary is, "two or more slices of bread or a split roll having a filling in between," or, "one slice of bread covered with food." The claim I am here to make today is that a burrito is in fact a sandwich.

This debate is typically a mental exercise performed between groups of bored friends. The general consensus is that a burrito is not a sandwich and I wish for everyone to take a second look.

Let me start by defining "burrito" as I have done with "sandwich". According to The Merriam Webster Dictionary a "burrito" is, "a flour tortilla rolled or folded around a filling."

I base my argument on the second definition for sandwich. While this

definition is there to cover a subspecies of "sandwich," the "open-faced sandwich," it also opens the door for the classification of burritos as sandwich.

The next step is proving that a tortilla is a type of bread. The minimum required to make bread is flour and water. The sandwich loaf we are all familiar with is given its volume from an additional ingredient in yeast.

Yeast is a microorganism that consumes sugar and produces carbon dioxide and alcohol. A crucial step in making bread when using yeast is to allow the bread to "rise." This is the action of allowing the yeast time to produce the carbon dioxide so as to make the air pockets with the bread referred to as the crumb.

Flatbread, like tortillas, differ in that they do not use yeast. As such, flatbread is not as voluminous as risen bread, but the fact remains that flatbread is still a type of bread.

I have now established that a flatbread is a form of bread conforming with the first part of the "sandwich" definition. As for the second half, the traditional fillings of a burrito are meats, beans, and/or rice.

I don't think I have to argue that meat, beans, and rice are foods. I should also state that this list is not the end all be all. Just as with the traditional sandwich you can throw anything you want into this package.

Now there are still some discrepancies between an open-faced sandwich and a burrito. The glaring one is the shape. This is simple, a burrito is an open-faced sandwich that had been curled around its fillings.

While I have technically proved the burrito's claims to sandwichdom there are still those who would deny the burrito on the grounds of function. To them I argue that the burrito is an improvement on the traditional sandwich.

The traditional sandwich we are all familiar with is

1. An example of a traditional sandwich, this being a vegetable sandwich. photo courtesy of Erin Wang on Pexels

2. Chicken wrapped in a toasted tortilla, a tasty looking burrito. photo courtesy of Nishant Aneja on Pexels

a thick cut sandwich loaf, smothered with the creators choice of any number of spreads, piled high with meat, vegetables, or whatever else the creator desires.

Burritos are equal in their capacity to be adapted to the chef's desires. However I will cede that, unlike the traditional sandwich, the burrito's capacity is dictated by the size of tortilla.

In counter to those I ask which is messier? The traditional sandwich with its open sides where particularly slippery fillings could make a quick escape or The burrito. By completely enveloping the

fillings there is no chance for one to make a similar escape.

Burritos service a much wider array of fillings than traditional sandwiches can because of the fact that they completely seal the fillings inside them. I wouldn't put rice and beans on a traditional sandwich, but I have no problem putting slices of deli ham and cheddar cheese in a tortilla, That is a wrap people.

If at your next outing with your friends someone boldly claims that burritos are not sandwiches. Now you are armed with the knowledge and the methods to prove them wrong.

