

= BLT =

A BLT (Bacon , Lettuce and Tomato) is a type of bacon sandwich . The standard BLT is made up of four ingredients : bacon , lettuce , tomato and bread . The BLT evolved from the tea sandwiches served before 1900 at a similar time to the club sandwich , although it is unclear when the name BLT became the norm .

= = Ingredients and preparation = =

While there are variations on the BLT , the essential ingredients are bacon , lettuce , tomato and bread . The quantity and quality of the ingredients are matters of personal preference . The bacon can be well cooked or tender , but as it " carries " the other flavours , chefs recommend using higher quality meat ; in particular , chef Edward Lee states " Your general supermarket bacon is not going to cut the mustard " .

Iceberg lettuce is a common choice because it does not add too much flavour whilst adding crunch . Food writer Ed Levine has suggested that BLT does not require lettuce at all , as it is " superfluous " , a suggestion that Jon Bonné , lifestyle editor at MSNBC , described as " shocking " . Michele Anna Jordan , author of The BLT Cookbook , believes the tomato is the key ingredient and recommends the use of the beefsteak tomato as it has more flesh and fewer seeds .

The sandwich is sometimes served with dressings , like mayonnaise . The bread can be of any variety , white or wholemeal , toasted or not , depending on personal preference .

= = Variations = =

The sandwich has a high sodium and fat content , and has been specifically targeted by UK café chains in an effort to reduce salt and fat . Due to this , low @-@ fat mayonnaise is a common substitute along with low salt bread and less fatty bacon . In 2009 , seven large cafe chains in the UK made a commitment to reducing salt and fat through similar substitutions . A more visible solution is to use turkey bacon in lieu of normal bacon . One of the variations on the BLT is the club sandwich , a two @-@ layered sandwich in which one layer is a BLT . The other layer can be almost any sort of sliced meat , normally chicken or turkey .

The BLT has been deconstructed into a number of forms ; for example , Edna Lewis and Scott Peacock created a BLT salad in The Gift of Southern Cooking by cutting the ingredients into 1 inch (25 mm) pieces and tossing in mayonnaise . This variation was described by New York Times writer Julia Reed as " even more perfect than a BLT " .

Vegans and vegetarians may replace bacon with tempeh as meat analogue instead . This recipe is called TLT (Tempeh , Lettuce , and Tomato) . Alternatively they can use mock bacon .

= = History = =

Although the ingredients of the BLT have existed for many years , there is little evidence of BLT sandwich recipes prior to 1900 . In the 1903 Good Housekeeping Everyday Cook Book , a recipe for a club sandwich included bacon , lettuce , tomato , mayonnaise and a slice of turkey sandwiched between two slices of bread . Whilst the 1929 book Seven Hundred Sandwiches does include a section on bacon sandwiches , the recipes often include pickles and none contain tomato .

The BLT became popular after World War II because of the rapid expansion of supermarkets , which allowed ingredients to be available year @-@ round . The initials , representing " bacon , lettuce , tomato " , likely began in the American restaurant industry as shorthand for the sandwich , but it is unclear when this transferred to the public consciousness . For example , a 1951 edition of the Saturday Evening Post makes reference to the sandwich , although it does not use its initials , describing a scene in which : " On the tray , invariably , are a bowl of soup , a toasted sandwich of bacon , lettuce and tomato , and a chocolate milk shake . "

A 1954 issue of Modern Hospital contains a meal suggestion that includes : " Bean Soup , Toasted

Bacon Lettuce and Tomato Sandwich , Pickles , Jellied Banana Salad , Cream Dressing , and Pound Cake . " By 1958 , Hellmann 's Mayonnaise advertised their product as " traditional on bacon , lettuce , and tomato sandwiches , " suggesting that the combination had been around for some time . However , there are several references to a " B.L.T " in the early 1970s , including in one review of Bruce Jay Friedman 's play entitled Steambath titled : " A B.L.T. for God ? hold the mayo . " . The abbreviation used in title references a line of dialogue in the play in which God yells , " Send up a bacon and lettuce and tomato sandwich , hold the mayo . You burn the toast , I 'll smite you down with my terrible swift sword . " The coexistence of the shortened version and the full name suggests this was a period of transition as the abbreviation was popularized .

= = = Popularity = = =

According to food historian John Mariani , it is the second most popular sandwich in the US , after the ham sandwich , and a poll by OnePoll in 2008 showed that it was the " nation 's favourite " sandwich in the UK . BLT sandwiches are popular especially in the summer , following the tomato harvest . In the USA , the BLT @-@ season is associated with an increase in the price of pork @-@ bellies , which are processed into bacon .

= = BLT in culture = =

In 1963 , pop art sculptor Claes Oldenburg created Giant BLT a soft sculpture representing the sandwich , now in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art . It measures 32 by 39 inches (81 cm x 99 cm) and uses vinyl , kapok and wood , painted in acrylic . Every time it is moved , it must be restacked , which means it varies between exhibits . The artist has said that he has not set it up personally since its creation in 1963 .

In 2003 , a record for the world 's largest BLT was created by Michele Anna Jordan , measuring 108 feet (33 m) in length . It was prepared at a 2003 tomato festival in Sonoma County , California and had a total area of 14 @,@ 976 square inches (96 @,@ 620 cm²) . In 2008 , Marie Ganister and Glenda Castelli created a 146 feet (45 m) BLT ? a sandwich which was originally planned with Jordan . The record was broken again by the Iron Barley restaurant in St. Louis , Missouri , with a BLT measuring 179 feet (55 m) , and is currently held by Bentley Dining Services for their 2009 attempt , measuring 209 feet 1 inch (63 @.@ 73 m) .

In 2004 , the New Statesman reported that the sandwich chosen by a politician as his " favourite " is loaded with political symbolism . For example , it suggested that a chicken tikka sandwich would be a " gentle nod to an imperial past and a firm statement of a multicultural present and future " . The article went on to explain that the then Leader of the Opposition William Hague had accused the then Prime Minister Tony Blair of being a hypocrite with regards to food , telling one portion of society that his favourite meal was fish and chips and another that it was a fresh fettuccine dish . The conclusion of the article was that Blair chose the BLT as his favourite sandwich , which appeals to all classes .