

SHRIMP BANH MI

This sandwich maintains all the crunchy, spicy, pickle-y goodness of a Vietnamese *banh mi*, but without having to resort to takeout to get one. Even better, instead of being filled with an array of often unidentifiable pork products (what exactly is that bologna-like cold cut anyway?), it's made from shrimp cakes seasoned with lemongrass, garlic, and ginger that you can whirl together in your food processor in minutes, then quickly pan-fry. The shrimp cakes become crisp and aromatic, with a springy texture to contrast with the juicy, quick-pickled carrots and radishes that get sandwiched alongside. You can make this as spicy or as mild as you like—just dial back or dial up the Sriracha and jalapeño to taste.

2 small carrots, peeled and shredded

½ cup thinly sliced radishes

1 jalapeño, seeded and diced, plus more thinly sliced jalapeño for serving

4 teaspoons rice vinegar

Pinch of sugar

Kosher salt to taste

2½ teaspoons Asian fish sauce

16 sprigs fresh cilantro

2 garlic cloves

2 teaspoons grated peeled fresh ginger

1 lemongrass stalk, trimmed, outer layers removed, inner core smashed and chopped

1 small fresh chile (such as Thai or serrano), halved and seeded

8 ounces shrimp, peeled and deveined

2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil

Mayonnaise, for serving

Sriracha, for serving

1 baguette, split lengthwise and crosswise, and toasted

TOTAL TIME: 25 MINUTES

SERVES 2

1. In a small bowl, toss together the carrots, radishes, jalapeño, 2 teaspoons of the rice vinegar, a pinch each of sugar and salt, and ½ teaspoon of the fish sauce. Stir to combine, and let it rest while you prepare the shrimp.
2. In a food processor, combine 8 cilantro sprigs with the garlic, ginger, lemongrass, chile, and remaining 2 teaspoons each fish sauce and rice vinegar, and process until everything is finely chopped. Add the shrimp and pulse the mixture, continually scraping down the sides of the bowl, until you have a chunky paste.
3. Heat the sesame oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add the shrimp paste, pressing it into the skillet. Cook until the paste is browned on one side, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip it over and cook until it is browned on the other side. (Don't worry if it breaks up. It can be like a hash or like a burger—both will work in the sandwich.) Sprinkle the cooked shrimp paste lightly with salt.

4. Spread mayonnaise and Sriracha to taste over the cut sides of the baguette pieces. Place the shrimp mixture on the bottom 2 pieces of baguette and top with the pickled carrots and radishes, the remaining 8 cilantro sprigs, and jalapeño slices to taste. Cover with baguette tops to form sandwiches.

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