

# bon appétit

Blogs

## Shaobing: The New Kid on the Asian Sandwich Scene

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Photographs by Bailey Ratta

In our January issue, we said that Asian-inspired subs were going to be the hotness in 2012--even more so than they already are. *Banh mi*, *mo*, *nizami* rolls, *ssam*, *shaobing*... *Shaobing*? Yes, add another entry to the growing list of Asian sandwich bases you can find in the States. This Chinese bread can do more than hold a piece of meat. Brooklyn's Snacky makes panini with it, Las Vegas's Yellowtail uses it as a foundation for its Big-Eye Tuna Pizza, and in Los Angeles, Three Flames Mongolian BBQ stuffs it with rib-eye and Swiss for a twist on the cheesesteak. But Fomami in Boston has made *shaobing* its bread and butter (pun intended). Theirs is flaky and slightly crispy on the surface, and tender and elastic inside, sort of like an Indian *dosa*. And it needs that stretch, because the folks at Fomami stuff it with spicy pork loin, grilled rib-eye, and chicken katsu, among other things.

We're into it.

*Shaobing* comes from China's *Shandong* province, where it's sold by street vendors and eaten alongside dinner in place of rice. Michael Wang, owner of Foumami and a Harvard Business School graduate, figured the quick-baking bread would fare well in Boston, too--especially during the bustling Financial District lunch hour. "A lot of better-known Asian sandwiches, like *banh-mi*, are served on Western breads," says Wang. "I wanted to make a sandwich that was completely Asian." We got an exclusive look at how he works his magic, which involves a *lot* of folding and flattening. Check it out below.

1 OF 11

◀ PREVIOUS    NEXT ▶



The dough starts out looking like dumplings

2 OF 11

◀ PREVIOUS    NEXT ▶



Layers of fat help the bread achieve Ultra-Flaky Status



Wang folds the dough into thirds, then passes it through a machine to flatten it



He makes sure the dough passes through the machine correctly



Each piece gets a sprinkle of sesame seeds



The dough puffs up in the oven



Customized setting on the restaurant's oven



The crispy, tender finished product



One of Fougami's most popular sandwiches: grilled soy and garlic-marinated rib-eye steak with sautéed onions and romaine lettuce



Spicy pork loin sandwich with pickled carrots and cucumbers, which Wang calls Fougami's version of *banh-mi*



Another popular menu item, the chicken katsu sandwich