

**Traditional New Orleans Favorite
For a Special Spring Picnic Supper
The Marvelous Muffuletta!**

Spring has sprung and everyone is itchin' to get outdoors to play and have a stress-free picnic supper. Enter --- the most flavorful and fun sandwich of all time --- the Marvelous Muffuletta – a cherished recipe from the New Orleans region!

The Muffuletta is a New Orleans original hero-type sandwich created at the Central Grocery in 1906 in New Orleans. It is legendary in Louisiana and has risen to such fame for the marvelous Olive Salad is what sets it apart from any other hero sandwich.

Apparently, this unique sandwich is finding its way to us locally, as just recently I have received requests for a Muffuletta recipe after people had been served one and wanted more! Well, here's my recipe, which is a family favorite.

New Orleans Muffuletta

1 loaf	Unsliced large round Crusty Italian or Sourdough Bread (8-10")*
½ lb.	Genoa Salami, thinly sliced
½ lb.	Provolone Cheese, thinly sliced
¼ lb.	Smoked Ham, thinly sliced

(additional ingredients – see below)

Olive Salad for Muffuletta

1/3 Cup	Extra Virgin Olive Oil
2 Tab.	Balsamic Vinegar or Red Wine Vinegar
2 Cloves	Fresh Garlic, minced
½ Cup	Pimiento-stuffed Green Olives, finely chopped
½ Cup	Kalamata or Ripe Olives, finely chopped
¼ Cup	Celery, finely chopped
¼ Cup	Red Onion, finely chopped
2 Tsp.	Fresh Oregano, minced
2 Tab.	Fresh Parsley, minced
¼ -1/2 Tsp.	Freshly Ground Black Pepper

For the Muffuletta Olive Salad – A Must!:

Whisk together first two ingredients and combine well with the remaining ingredients. Cover and refrigerate --- best if refrigerated at least 8 hours to meld all the flavors. Stir occasionally.

(To Olive Salad: Can also add:

Capers, anchovy filets (mashed into olive oil before whisking), and chopped sweet red pepper. Some folks in New Orleans like to add chopped mixed pickled vegetables, but I prefer to keep the Olive Salad basic and serve the pickled vegetables as a side item.)

MAKING A MUFFULETTA:

Cut bread horizontally in half. Starting about 1 inch from the crust, remove ½ inch layer or more of soft bread from inside of each half, leaving shells about 1 inch thick bread.

Drain Olive Salad, reserving the marinade.

Brush this reserved marinade over the cut sides of the bread.

Spoon ½ to ¾ of the olive salad over the bottom crust of bread.

Top with ½ the cheese and one of the meats. Repeat with the remaining cheese and meat and finish the layering with the remainder of the olive salad.

Cover with the top half of the bread.

Serve immediately by cutting round sandwich into 6 large wedges and serve with chips or a side dish of choice. If you are making to travel to a picnic supper, go ahead and cut into 6 large wedges and wrap in foil and head for the park.

****** One Muffuletta makes 6 large servings!!!**

Additional Ingredients:

- You can also serve this Muffuletta by adding lettuce and fresh tomato slices on the bottom layer --- especially with the wonderful tomatoes at the Jungle right now. You can purchase the pickled vegetables as well at the Jungle to add if you like. You can find the very best olives at Jungle Jim's Olive Bar right across from the Deli featuring Boar's Head meats and cheeses, where you can find the Provolone, Genoa Salami, and the Black Forest Ham. Right around the corner, you'll find fresh baked bread. If you like, instead of making the Muffuletta on one large round of bread and cutting into wedges, you can buy individual size round loaves of bread to make individual versions of this classic.**

One last note: If you prefer, you can serve this sandwich warm from the oven. Simply make it as above (do not add the lettuce and tomato slices), wrap in aluminum foil and place in a 375 degree oven for 20 minutes or until heated through and the cheese has melted. Either way, you will love what the Olive Salad does to ignite the flavor of this traditional favorite!

Jungle Jim's Margie Potts