

Food Review: Num Pang's Batali Pang

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By Mandy Kessler

Last week, a group of Food Bank staff gathered for a big group lunch to test out a delicious new partnership between longtime Food Bank supporter Mario Batali and the taste-masters behind Cambodian sandwich shop Num Pang. Aptly named the Batali Pang, this unique new sandwich benefits the Food Bank, so we may be a little biased. But if you question the objectivity of the following review, we have a solution for you – try the sandwich out for yourself and let us know what you think! You know you want to anyway.

The Batali Pang consists of authentic Italian cotechino sausage from Brooklyn Bangers with balsamic pickled onions and Cacio de Roma cheese, folded into the traditional Num Pang ingredients – homemade chili mayo, pickled carrots, cucumber and cilantro.

As a bahn mi-lover, this sandwich offered just what I hoped for, traditional Asian flavors with a unique and pleasing Italian twist. The sausage had just the right amount of spice and fat to pair with chili mayo, and the pickled onions and Cacio de Roma cheese added a delicious bite. And after enjoying it all between the chewy-on-the-outside, soft-inside semolina flour baguette, I now know why the shop is named "Num Pang" a Cambodian term for "bread." With ingredients originating from countries not usually found in the same sentence, let alone sandwich, the different flavors came together seamlessly. I can safely say that all of my coworkers who joined me in testing out this unique partnership agreed – the Batali Pang is not to be missed.

I also have to add that, when you order the Batali Pang, check out Num Pang's grilled corn on the cob. Our Fundraising Operations Coordinator summed up how we all felt about this addition to our meal: "I'm in a roast corn and meatball coma at the moment. Just the right balance of flavors, not too much of anything. Incredibly indulgent and delicious."

But don't take our word for it – check it out and let us know what you think. And remember, for every Batali Pang you order through March 15, a three dollar donation will be made to the Food Bank – helping to provide 15 free meals for New Yorkers in need.