

# The SunBreak

## Oh Happy Day! Potbelly Arrives in Seattle

by Audrey on June 8, 2011



There are few things I miss about Chicago like a toasty Potbelly sandwich. From their humble beginnings at a Lincoln Ave. antique shop, the Chicago-based chain has grown to over two hundred strong nationwide, and the first in Washington State opened in downtown Seattle yesterday. (Don't worry, Bellevue, you'll have one soon enough.)

I'm not even going to try to be unbiased here, as there's really no point—if you do a Google search of my name, one of the images that turns up is me stuffing my face at the Potbelly at the Midway Airport. Because that's how much I love Potbelly: I will fly in and out of *MIDWAY* (shudder) in order to get one of their sandwiches.

So this afternoon, The SunBreak lunch crew headed downtown to have a sandwich and check out the new digs. Potbelly is located on 4th at Pike, right next to Michael Mina's RN74, Murray Stenson's new home (or not?), set to open Monday the 13th. There was a stilt-walker to greet the crowd, and while the line for sandwiches was out the door, you could see it was moving along nicely, thanks to the highly efficiently-run Potbelly operation.

As the line snaked through the brightly-lit restaurant, there was a worker to hand out menus (though the offerings are all listed there on chalkboards) and another worker wielding a tablet to take your sandwich order, so that it was already going through the oven and getting nice and toasty by the time you reached the counter. (You're also able to fax in an order [[pdf](#)], and most other locations have delivery, so I'd expect this one to include that option at some point in time.) The whole thing took maybe ten minutes, and if Potbelly can handle a grand opening this smoothly, they're well set to handle the daily lunch rush.

Now, let's get to the food: All sandwiches are approximately \$5 and come on white or multigrain wheat rolls. There are also salads, pickles, chips, a variety of juice and pop, hand-dipped malts and shakes, and cookies, but to be sure, it's all about the sandwiches. My Potbelly of choice is the turkey and swiss, which was juicy and excellent as always, while the rest of The SunBreak tried A Wreck (salami, roast beef, turkey, ham, and swiss) and a double-ham-no-cheese. Potbelly is great about individualizing each sandwich with condiments and toppings, but this ain't Subway.

The lunchmeat actually tastes like lunchmeat (from an ANIMAL), while the mustard, peppers, pickles, oil, and seasoning add a nice tang to the creaminess of the mayo and cheese. If you're looking to cut carbs, please don't talk to me, but feel free to order the sandwich "thin-cut" for a third less roll. Regardless, what's great about the bread is that it's not overwhelming. The roll has a nice give and toasts well, but it's not overly chewy or so rough that it takes the skin off the roof of your mouth.

Everything at Potbelly is about balance. And from experience I know that the sandwiches at a new location only get better over time, as the oven is broken in and each sandwich comes to acquire the flavor profile of all sandwiches that have come before it. It's delicious, and it almost tastes like home.



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