

NEW YORK

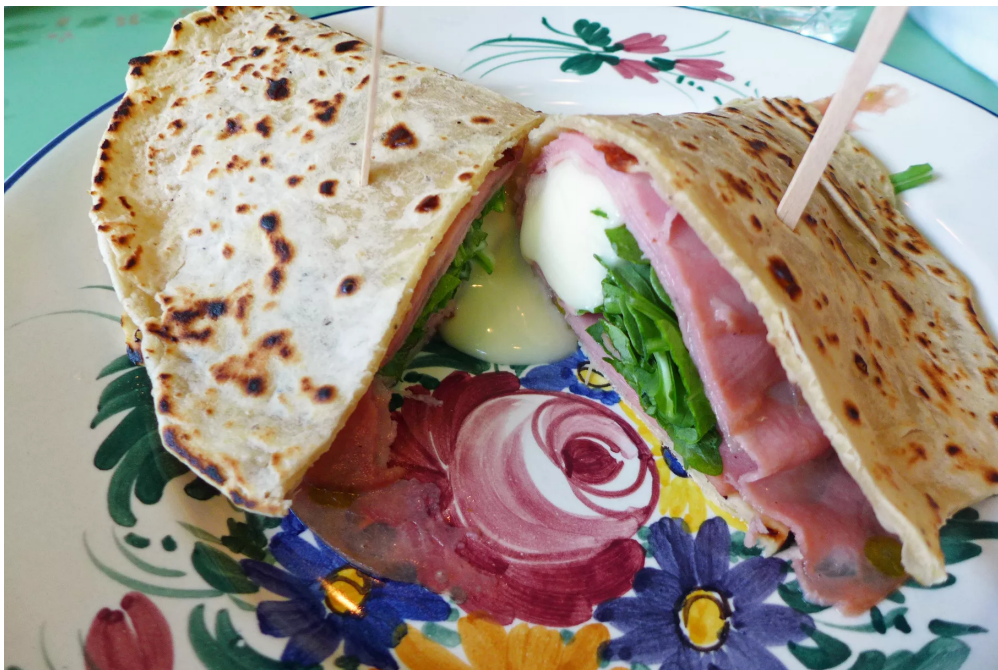
SANDWICH OF THE WEEK

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# This Cheese-Oozing New Italian Flatbread Is Robert Sietsema's Most Memorable Sandwich Yet

## No it's not a panini, but it still tastes great

by Robert Sietsema | Oct 1, 2019, 10:35am EDT



The crescia sandwich hails from the region on the Adriatic side of the Apennines called Le Marche.

These days, everyone knows about **Italian panini**, simple sandwiches made with an oblong roll and a slab of porchetta or slice of pecorino and not much else. They are tasty in their elemental simplicity and would be unthinkable without that yeast-risen roll. But Italy also has another type of sandwich that doesn't depend on yeast and is much older, perhaps hearkening back to Roman times.

Driving along a country lane in Umbria, you'll sometimes spot a rotisserie up on a hillside, a rural place where chicken, lamb, or goat are turned on a spit over charcoal or shards of wood. This meat or poultry is usually served on a flatbread called *torta al testo* that was historically cooked on a stone in the same fire. Across the Apennine Mountains in Le Marche, a similar flatbread often made with lard is called **crescia**. Folded over, it is also used to make sandwiches, usually featuring thin slices of meat or cheese, or both.



Cremini's lies on the quiet end of Court Street.

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Inside is a bar, currently liquorless, and a few tables.

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New York City has long had a similar Italian flatbread, called *piadina*, originating in Romagna in northern Italy and available at the West Village's long-running **Malatesta**. There, this simple sandwich comes with a single slice of prosciutto or melting plank of mozzarella, or both. But now we have an actual accurate rendition of *crescia* and the sandwiches made from them at **Cremini's**, a new Italian restaurant in the southern reaches of Carroll Gardens.

The crescia sandwich (\$10) is really quite amazing. The flatbread is dappled with brown spots and tastes of wheat, and the selection of fillings (pick one meat and one cheese) is identical to the list of cheese and charcuterie listed earlier in the menu. Naturally, I picked **mortadella** and had it wrapped in the flatbread with gorgonzola, which oozed out the end. The crescia is briefly heated as the sandwich is assembled. Made verdant with a wad of baby arugula that adds a pleasant bitter edge, the sandwich is certainly one of the most memorable of this series. *521 Court St, between 9th and Garnet streets, Carroll Gardens*



Though there's no wine yet, a beguiling selection of Italian sodas is offered.

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## Cremini's

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