



Rising High Bakery

More Than A Sandwich
Entrées \$5-\$10
480 East Bay St.
958-8596
www.risinghighcafe.com

At first glance, Rising High Bakery Cafe seems like a chain — not in a negative way, mind you, but rather just the kind of thing some enterprising young person cooked up and has begun spreading around the country, like many other examples in the genre. Think Just Fresh, if you know what I mean.

Happily, Rising High is independent. “The First Store,” if you will. It’s taken up the spot on East Bay near the Aquarium where That’s Amore pizza once stood, and the conversion has been a happy one. Gone is the bar from the back, and the space has been lightened up and moved around a bit, making the most of the room’s good attributes. It’s light, open, and inviting.

On entering, one finds a dizzying array of options on chalkboards above one’s head. Sandwiches, of course, but also salads, sides, variously stuffed baked potatoes, and more. Being a bakery and all, I decided to go with sandwiches. Each of the named sandwiches is built with its own bread type, something that suited me fine. I chose the Californian, the chicken sandwich, the Dagwood, and the turkey panini. Each was at least very good — nay, excellent.

“The Californian” (\$5.79) sported swiss and turkey as the star ingredients, with a killer lighter nut bread slathered in tasty guacamole, with cucumber, sprouts, and tomato rounding it out nicely. Every veggie was fresh, crisp, and pretty, with hats off for two flawless slabs of tomato per sandwich.

The chicken sandwich (\$5.79) was comprised of a wonderful chicken salad ... uh ... sandwiched (sorry) between not-too-thick-but-substantial slices of “black bread.” Turns out “black” is really brown, but fresh, pungent, and just soft enough. I figure the greens were leaf lettuce, but it took careful consideration to determine that they were not, in fact, spinach. Again with the nice tomatoes, and a nice hint of garlic in the smooth chicken salad.

The turkey panini (\$5.79) was similarly a delight. The focaccia bread was crusty and redolent with rosemary without being a crust-bomb, and judicious use of the panini press added crispy, tasty grill marks to the sandwich without compressing it to death or adding burnt-tasting elements to it. It was loaded with those prime tomatoes, slabs of cheddar, plenty of turkey, and an intriguingly subtle herb mayonnaise. Kudos again.

“The Dagwood” (\$6.99) was a sandwich true to its name. Salami, turkey, ham, swiss, cheddar, leaf lettuce, onions, and a very nice honey mustard, all heaped on a white bread whose quality is maligned by the use of the term “white bread.” Thick, meaty, and delicious.

Side dishes are included one-to-a-sandwich, and included a mayo-less rotini pasta salad I really liked, a competent potato salad, fairly pedestrian chips -and-salsa, and a good ol’ bag of potato chips. All sandwiches came with a very tasty, crunchy kosher dill spear.

The room looks great, the staff is young and eager, and the food is simple, yet simply good. Judging from the cross-section of downtowners I saw on my visit, folks are taking advantage of this bright new spot. If it’s a great sandwich you’re after, this may be the place. I’ll be back to check out the rest of the menu on my own time, as I’m sure I haven’t seen half of what they have to offer. There’s breakfast with pastries and coffees, espresso and bagels, there’s beer and wine available, there’s soups and salads, “take-away” bread by the loaf, free wireless internet access, and more. Here’s one fan hoping Rising High is here for a while.