

Culture

Brooklyn's new 'lard bagel' is not kosher. But it is delicious.

Caputo Bagels is loading the Jewish staple with rendered pork fat, salami and cheese

By [Hannah Feuer](#) October 10, 2026



The sign outside Caputo Bagels. Photo by Hannah Feuer

Bagels have long been a staple of the Jewish diet, even if they're not exactly health food. But the latest addition to New York's bagel scene achieves the impressive feat of inviting both your doctor and your rabbi's scorn: the "lard bagel," made with rendered pork fat.

The decidedly unkosher offering is on the menu at Caputo Bagels, which opened Monday in Brooklyn's Park Slope neighborhood. The bagel shop is the successor to the once-popular Caputo Bakery in Carroll Gardens, which closed in April after five generations of operation.

At the now-shuttered Caputo Bakery, "lard bread" was a bestseller. Caputo Bagels seeks to recreate the lard bread experience, but in bagel form. Lard, salami, provolone cheese, salt and pepper are all folded into sourdough, hand-rolled, then boiled and baked at 425 degrees. The Italian-Jewish mash-up is the product of a partnership between James Caputo and Rafi Hasid, who also runs the Israeli restaurant Miriam next door.

Eager to try this bagel novelty, I stocked up on Lactaid pills and trekked to Park Slope early Friday morning. There, I met Caputo himself, who said the lard bread was a family recipe and an Italian-American specialty. Lard, he explained, was “a couple levels above adding butter to your bread.”

“A lot of people who went to the bakery are now rushing here to try the lard bagel,” Caputo said, adding that he did “feel bad” that kosher customers wouldn’t be able to eat the signature item.



The lard bagel. Photo by Hannah Feuer

I reassured Caputo that I did not keep kosher and was eager to taste the lard bagel myself.

But before digging in, I wanted to know what to expect. The first customer I spoke with had ordered an everything bagel, explaining that she hadn’t known the lard bagel “existed.” The second, visiting New York City from Spain, had opted for banana bread.

I asked her if she had considered ordering the lard bagel. “At this hour in the morning?” she asked.

I was starting to get worried. If nobody orders the lard bagel, does it make a sound?

Fortunately, I soon met Kristin Stoller, a local who used to frequent Caputo Bakery. She had ordered both a lard bagel and a plain one, with a side of scallion cream cheese, to bring home for herself and her boyfriend.

“He’s anxious about the lard bagel,” she told me, but she was hoping to convert him.

I asked if she would do a taste test. “Just like the bread!” she said after taking a bite. “This is perfection.”

Her enthusiasm seemed to be contagious. The first customer I’d spoken with came up to me, this time with a lard bagel in hand. I’d piqued her curiosity. “It’s a savory explosion,” she said.

Outside, I found a customer named Kendra Koch sitting on a bench with her dog, Pom Pom. She, too, had ordered the lard bagel, topped with olive cream cheese.

“It tastes like pizza,” she said as Pom Pom angled toward the bagel, seemingly longing for a bite.



Pom Pom makes a beeline for the lard bagel. Photo by Hannah Feuer

I summoned my courage and ordered one sans toppings, figuring it had enough going on flavor-wise to stand on its own. One bite revealed a cheesy, peppery richness. I wasn't sure I tasted the lard, but I also wasn't sure if I was supposed to. My official verdict: delicious.

It was just too bad that my kosher friends couldn't try it. I'm holding out hope that the schmaltz bagel will catch on next.