



Restaurants offer special dishes that define the local favorites. In London, it could be shepherd's pie, in Paris foi gras, in Vienna weinerschnitzel, in Baltimore crabcakes and in Beijing ... Peking duck, of course.

Outside, on city streets the offerings from carts may not be as fancy, but they can be just as tasty and much cheaper than in sit-down restaurants. Also, dining on a nearby park bench or museum steps can be just as enjoyable as at a restaurant table.

Ethnic street foods are not confined to their country of origin. You'll find Chinese food in Rome, falafel in Oslo, bagels in Dublin and pizza in Hong Kong. However, although many ethnic foods are offered beyond their native origins, there's always a familiar street cart food item that defines the city. Here are some examples:

Philadelphia Soft Pretzels: When your travel4seniors.com editor was growing up there, spending the weekly nickel allowance on a Philly soft pretzel was a treat. Salted and smothered in mustard and heated by a little burner within the vendor's glass-top pushcart, it was a wonderful, tummy-filling moment.

On a recent visit, and running out of time to make a flight, there were no soft pretzel street vendors to be seen. However, there was a reasonable facsimile in a Philly airport food shop for \$1 each. A dozen were on the flight home. Ref: ushistory.org/tour/pretzel-museum.

Berlin Currywurst Sausage: According to historians, the origin of the sausage is mentioned in Homer's writings in the 6th Century B.C. Hot dog vending started in Germany as early as the 1700s, when it first appeared in Frankfurt. Thus the name frankfurter. Ref: hot-dog.org.

A currently popular sausage on a bun specialty in Berlin is der currywurst. The vendor sprinkles curry powder on the hot pork link, adds tomato paste and Worcestershire sauce and stuffs it in a bun. It may include choice of fried potatoes or saurkraut, costing about \$2.

Tel Aviv Sabich: Pronounced sa-BEEK, it originated in Iraq, but is enthusiastically enjoyed by Israelis in Tel Aviv and elsewhere. The vegetarian ingredients vary with each cart, but a sabich usually consists of a large, folded pita bread stuffed with sliced egg, eggplant, hummus, tahini, potato, cucumbers and hot mango sauce. The price is about \$5. Ref: test.tickthat.com

Paris Jambon et Fromage Baguette: On a recent visit to France, as we strolled at noontime near the Sorbonne, we passed many street vendors. They were peddling all kinds of crepes and other French delicacies.

Then I spotted what looked like my favorite, a good old American ham and cheese sandwich. When I asked for it from the vendor, she just gave me a blank look. My companion laughed and told me it was the Paris favorite among locals and students, called the jambon et fromage baguette. Translation: ham and cheese sandwich, for about \$8. Ref: baguettebagatelle.com/bistro_dejeuners

Rio de Janeiro Churrasquinhos: This delicious Brazilian street delicacy is beef chunks on a skewer barbecued over an open fire. When we were in Rio last year, the first places we wanted to see was the famous Copacabana boardwalk and Impanema beaches. There were many vendors, and we ate churrasquinhos on the beach while watching the surf and bikinis. We paid \$5 for our churrasquinhos. Ref: foursquare.com/...churrasquinhos