

WHAT
HAPPENED

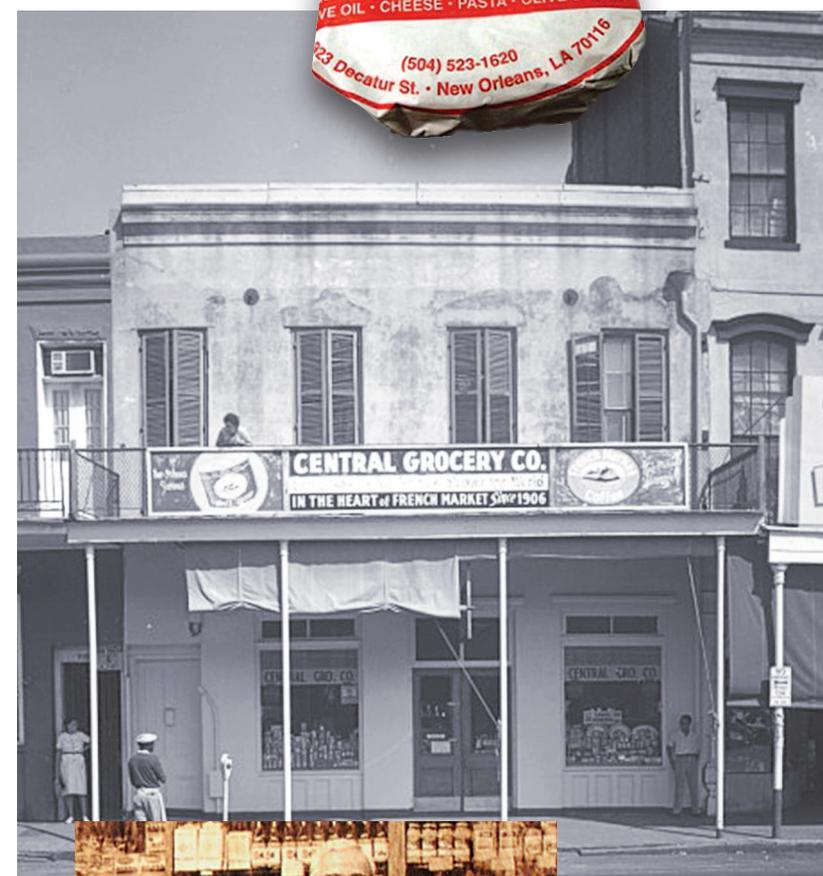
Salvatore Lupo
created the
muffuletta
in 1906 at
Central Grocery.

A **muffuletta** is fresh bread, cold cuts, olives, cheese and Italian heritage all wrapped in one white paper package.

Unlike the other quintessential New Orleans sandwich — the po-boy — the muffuletta is not subject to refinements. The sandwich is the same as it was when it was created in 1906: layers of salami, ham, mortadella, pepperoni, capicola, provolone and Swiss cheese, topped with an olive salad on a 10-inch round of light Italian bread called a muffuletta.

The sandwich originated at the Italian Central Grocery in the French Quarter, across from the French Market, where many Italians worked. According to the oral history of the sandwich, store owner Salvatore Lupo noticed market workers and farmers who came to his store for lunch had a hard time juggling and eating their olives, bread and meat — which he sold separately — so he decided to put them all together and made an antipasti sandwich of sorts. The sandwich eventually came to be known by the name of the sesame-seed topped bread, baked in abundance by Sicilian bakers in the Quarter.

The Central Grocery, owned by Lupo's grandson and two cousins, still sells the muffuletta, but so do many other restaurants and stores, and the olive salad — a mixture of green olives, capers, cauliflower, carrots, celery, olive oil, garlic and herbs — is sold throughout the region as a condiment in its own right.



The muffuletta originated at Central Grocery across from the French Market.

The sandwich was later recreated at the nearby Progress Grocery, left, which gave Central Grocery serious competition before it was closed in 2001.