

spilling the beans

ON FOOD IN BOSTON

Amsterdam Falafelshop

Where there are college students, there is food. While Kendall and Harvard Square have their fair share of restaurants, Kenmore Square also has an incredible selection of delicious places to eat. Right next to Boston University's campus, the area has a few late-night, cheap eats that would satisfy any craving.



This week, Cathy and I visited the newly-opened Amsterdam Falafelshop in Kenmore Square. At first glance, the shop looks like a burger chain with diner-style seating and fries, but upon further inspection, no meat is in sight. Rather, Amsterdam Falafelshop is clearly inspired by Middle Eastern cuisine—there's hummus, pickled vegetables, and, of course, falafels!

Cathy tried the small Falafel Sandwich, which consisted of a pita pocket filled with 3 falafel balls and as many toppings as she could fit into the sandwich. A buffet-style topping bar included toppings like pickled cauliflower, hummus, and other Mediterranean items. "I don't eat falafels that often, but I definitely enjoyed this sandwich," Cathy explained. "The pita can't fit that many toppings, so choose wisely." Later, we witnessed some clever sandwich stuffers using the sample spoons to pack the toppings into the pita, maximizing their topping concentration.

I tried the Falafel Bowl, with three falafel balls and unlimited toppings (well, it's measured by weight, so not exactly unlimited). I tried to get a little bit of everything, and in the end, it tasted like healthy fast food.



To get my portion of carbs for the day, I ordered white pita bread along with my bowl, which was wonderfully toasted, and had a slightly sweet aftertaste. I'm a fan of pickled vegetables, and the ones here had the perfectly sour-sweet taste.

In addition to our falafel dishes, we shared a "small" order of fries, which came in a funnel, and conveniently fit into a hole in the table. Light and crispy, the fries tasted fine by themselves or when dipped into the complementary sauces that included strange flavors like garlic cream, or curry ketchup.

I talked to the store owner, Matt, for a bit, who told me how this Kenmore Square location is the second Boston-area Amsterdam Falafel Shop (the other one being in Davis Square), with the original shop being in Washington D.C. He explained how all of the toppings (and falafels) are made in-house, with the shop even pickling its own vegetables!

Overall, Amsterdam Falafelshop certainly has the potential to be the college-kid's next favorite food shop. The beauty of the shop is that it's all do-it-yourself, but that's also the caveat—there's no set menu of sandwiches where the perfect combination of toppings has already been picked out. I'm sure I'll be back the next time I'm craving something unique, though it will probably take me a few tries until I can perfect the topping distribution in my falafel bowl. **8/10**