



Basic Lean Beef Hamburger

Servings: 8

Prep Time: 15min

Cook Time: 10min

Ingredients

- 4 slices bread, crusts removed
- 190ml fresh or evaporated milk
- 1kg best quality minced steak
- 2 teaspoons salt
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon worcestershire sauce
- 1 small onion, grated or very finely chopped
- 2 eggs

Directions

1. Tear bread into pieces and soak in milk for 10 minutes, then beat with a fork. Lightly mix together all ingredients except eggs, then stir in eggs with a fork. With wet hands, shape into 8 equal-size patties.
2. Heat grill or pan, brush hamburgers with oil or butter and cook at high heat to sear the outsides, then turn down heat to medium and finish cooking. Pan-fry for a total of 4–6 minutes on each side, or grill for 7–10 minutes on each side for medium-done. Serve, on buns or toast if desired, with a selection of garnishes or sauce of your choice.

VARIATIONS

3. Herbed hamburgers: Add 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill, thyme or other herbs, or 1 teaspoon dried, to basic hamburger mixture.
4. Garlic hamburgers: Add 1 fat clove garlic, crushed, and 2 tablespoons chopped parsley to basic hamburger mixture.
5. Devilled hamburgers: Add 2 tablespoons tomato sauce, 1½ teaspoons prepared English mustard, 2 teaspoons lemon juice and a dash of Tabasco sauce to basic hamburger mixture.
6. Stuffed hamburgers: Shape basic hamburger mixture into 16 thin patties. On 8 of the patties place one of the following: 1 tablespoon chopped, sautéed mushrooms, bacon or onion; small piece cheddar, Swiss, camembert or blue cheese; 1 tablespoon chopped, mixed apple, celery

and walnuts; 1 tinned anchovy fillet chopped with a few capers. Top with remaining patties and press edges to join.

HAMBURGER TOPPINGS

7. Top each freshly hamburger with one of the following:
8. A thick slice of sautéed tomato and 2–3 sautéed mushrooms threaded on a toothpick.
9. 1 teaspoon sour cream or plain yoghurt, seasoned with salt and pepper and sprinkled with snipped chives.
10. A slice of Maitre d'Hôtel, anchovy or other flavoured butter.
11. A thin slice of raw onion, topped with a spoonful of mayonnaise and a sprig of parsley.

SAUCES FOR HAMBURGERS

12. Red wine sauce: Pan-fry hamburgers, remove and keep warm. Add 2 tablespoons chopped spring onions to pan and sauté for 1 minute, then add 125 ml red wine. Boil rapidly for 2 minutes, season with salt and pepper, remove from heat and swirl in 30 g butter. Pour over hamburgers and serve immediately.
13. Stroganoff sauce: Pan-fry hamburgers, remove and keep warm. Add 1 small onion, finely chopped, to pan and sauté, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add 125 g sliced mushrooms and cook, stirring, until limp. Stir in 125 g sour cream. Season with salt and pepper, heat through and spoon over hamburgers. Sprinkle hamburgers with paprika and serve immediately.

TIPS:

14. A first-rate hamburger can stand comparison with its grand relation, a fine steak. Like steak, a good hamburger is juicy within, crusty outside and full of flavour. The first secret of success is to build flavour and moistness into the mixture; the second is to handle it lightly when shaping so that it holds together without compacting. If you want the inside rare, make the patties about 4 cm thick; for a well-cooked interior, make patties 2–2.5 cm thick. Cook a hamburger as you would a steak: whether pan-frying or grilling, sear the outside at high heat, then turn heat down to medium to finish cooking.