

KAT'S VERSION OF THE ULTIMATE HAMBURGER, FEATURING BACON ONION JAM

Forewarning: This recipe is not your average "throw a burger on a grill" type of recipe. It uses home ground beef (which you have to freeze) so you will need both a food processor and about 90 minutes of prep time. If the rest of the recipe looks good but the idea of grinding your own beef is too much, then you can of course use store bought 90% lean ground beef and follow the rest of the recipe as written. (But seriously, grinding your own is crazy-good).

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 pounds sirloin steak tips, trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
1 ounce dried porcini mushroom, ground to a powder
Kosher salt and pepper
4 tablespoons bacon onion jam (recipe: <http://bit.ly/1KV3DAa>)
lettuce and tomato
4 large eggs, fried
4 hamburger buns

DIRECTIONS

Place beef chunks and butter on large plate in single layer. Freeze until meat is very firm and starting to harden around edges but still pliable, about 30 minutes.

Place one-quarter of meat and one-quarter of butter cubes in food processor and pulse until finely ground into pieces size of rice grains, 15 to 20 pulses, stopping and redistributing meat around bowl as necessary to ensure beef is evenly ground. Do not do this all in one go as the meat will heat up in the food processor and you will get more of a puree than rise-sized pieces. Transfer meat to baking sheet. Repeat grinding with remaining 3 batches of meat and butter. Spread mixture over sheet and inspect carefully, discarding any long strands of gristle or large chunks of hard meat, fat, or butter.

Sprinkle 1 teaspoon pepper, 3/4 teaspoon salt and the porcini powder over meat and gently toss with fork to combine. Divide meat into 4 balls. Toss each between hands until uniformly but lightly packed. Gently flatten into patties 3/4 inch thick and about 4 1/2 inches in diameter. Using thumb, make 1-inch-wide by 1/4-inch-deep depression in center of each patty (this is to keep them from doming on the grill. Transfer patties to platter and freeze for 30 to 45 minutes.

(I have a gas grill, so these are the directions; follow your standard directions for a charcoal grill). Turn all burners to high, cover, and heat grill until hot, about 15 minutes. Leave all burners on high. Clean and oil cooking grate.

Re-season one side of patties liberally with salt and pepper. Using spatula, flip patties and season other side. Grill patties, without moving them, until browned and meat easily releases from grill, 4 to 7 minutes. Flip burgers and continue to grill until browned on second side and meat registers 125 degrees for medium-rare or 130 degrees for medium, 4 to 7 minutes longer. Transfer burgers to plate and let rest for 5 minutes.

While burgers rest, lightly toast buns on grill, 1 to 2 minutes. Fry your eggs to desired doneness (I like mine "medium-runny"). Slice your tomatoes and prepare the lettuce leaves.

Assemble by spreading 1/2 tablespoon bacon jam on the top and bottom bun. Place on a patty, a tomato slice, a fried egg and lettuce. Enjoy!