The Classic Burger

PREP AND COOK TIME: About 30 minutes

MAKES: 4 servings

NOTES: If you want absolute bacteria safety, you need to cook your burgers to 160°. This recipe will keep them moist. To make cheeseburgers, about 1 minute before burgers are done, top with sliced cheese; continue cooking until cheese begins to melt.

- **1 pound ground lean (7% fat) beef**
- **1 large egg**
- **½ cup minced onion**
- **¼ cup fine dried bread crumbs**
- **1 tablespoon Worcestershire**
- **1 or 2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced**
- **About ½ teaspoon salt**
- **About ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- **4 hamburger buns (4 in. wide), split**
- **About ¼ cup mayonnaise**
- **About ¼ cup ketchup or sweet-and-spicy sauce (recipe at far right)**
- **4 iceberg lettuce leaves, rinsed and crisped**
- **1 firm-ripe tomato, cored and thinly sliced**
- **4 thin slices red onion**

1. In a bowl, mix ground beef, egg, onion, bread crumbs, Worcestershire, garlic, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper until well blended. Divide mixture into four equal portions and shape each into a patty about 4 inches wide.

2. Lay burgers on an oiled barbecue grill over a solid bed of hot coals or high heat on a gas grill (you can hold your hand at grill level only 2 to 3 seconds); close lid on gas grill. Cook burgers, turning once, until browned on both sides and no longer pink inside (cut to test), 7 to 8 minutes total. Remove from grill.

3. Lay buns, cut side down, on grill and cook until lightly toasted, 30 seconds to 1 minute.

4. Spread mayonnaise and ketchup on bun bottoms. Add lettuce, tomato, burger, onion, and salt and pepper to taste. Set bun tops in place.

Per serving: 480 cal., 43% (207 cal.) from fat; 31 g protein; 23 g fat (5.6 g sat.); 37 g carbo (2.4 g fiber); 978 mg sodium; 127 mg chol.

Gold Nugget Burger

PREP AND COOK TIME: About 30 minutes for burgers, plus 40 minutes for sauce and guacamole

MAKES: 4 servings

NOTES: If you like your burgers on the rare side, buy the ground beef from a high-quality source. You may also use ground beef with a higher fat content.

- **1½ pounds ground beef sirloin or chuck (10% fat; see notes)**
- **About ½ teaspoon salt**
- **About ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- **8 slices (2 in. by 1 in. and ¼ in. thick) cheddar cheese**
- **1 red onion (about 8 oz.), peeled and cut into ½-inch-thick slices**
- **4 Kaiser, onion, or crusty round rolls (4 in. wide), split**
- **Sweet-and-spicy sauce (recipe at right)**
- **1½ cups shredded iceberg lettuce (4 oz.)**
- **1 firm-ripe tomato (about 8 oz.), cored and thinly sliced**
- **Guacamole (recipe at right)**

1. In a bowl, gently mix ground beef, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper.

2. Divide meat mixture into eight equal portions and shape each into a 4-inch round. Top each of four rounds with 2 slices of cheese. Lay another patty on top of each and press edges together to seal.

3. Lay burgers and onion slices on an oiled barbecue grill over a solid bed of hot coals or high heat on a gas grill (you can hold your hand at grill level only 2 to 3 seconds); close lid on gas grill. Cook burgers, turning once, until browned on both sides and done to your liking (cut to test), about 7 minutes total for medium-rare. Cook onions, also turning once, until browned on both sides, 7 to 8 minutes total. Remove from grill.

4. Lay buns, cut side down, on grill and cook until lightly toasted, 30 seconds to 1 minute.

5. Spread sweet-and-spicy sauce on bun bottoms. Add lettuce, tomato, burger, onion, and guacamole. Set bun tops in place. Serve with remaining guacamole, sauce, and salt and pepper to add to taste.

Per serving: 589 cal., 41% (243 cal.) from fat; 47 g protein; 27 g fat (12 g sat.); 38 g carbo (2.9 g fiber); 856 mg sodium; 133 mg chol.

Sweet-and-spicy sauce. In a 1½- to 2-quart pan, combine ¾ cup **ketchup,** ½ cup **orange juice,** ¼ cup **Worcestershire,** ¼ cup **raisins,** 1 tablespoon minced **fresh ginger,** 1 tablespoon minced **garlic,** 2 tablespoons **lime** juice, and ½ teaspoon **cayenne.** Bring to a simmer over medium heat, then reduce heat so mixture barely simmers and cook, uncovered, stirring often, until sauce is thick and reduced to 1 cup, 25 to 30 minutes. Whirl mixture in a blender until smooth. Serve warm or cool. Chill airtight up to 2 weeks. Makes about 1 cup.

Per tablespoon: 27 cal., 3% (0.9 cal.) from fat; 0.5 g protein; 0.1 g fat (0 g sat.); 6.8 g carbo (0.3 g fiber); 175 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

Guacamole. Pit and peel 1 **ripe avocado** (8 to 10 oz.). In a bowl, coarsely mash with a potato masher. Stir in 2 tablespoons chopped **fresh cilantro,** 1 tablespoon **lime** juice, 2 to 3 teaspoons minced **fresh jalapeño chile,** 1 clove **garlic,** peeled and minced, and **salt** to taste. Makes about 1 cup.

Per tablespoon: 18 cal., 78% (14 cal.) from fat; 0.2 g protein; 1.6 g fat (0.3 g sat.); 0.9 g carbo (0.2 g fiber); 1.3 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

Fine points from the experts

Josie Le Balch at Josie recommends:

- To keep the juices in, don't overwork the meat mixture.
- To prevent sticking, preheat grill; make sure it's really hot and clean.
- Once you put a burger on the grill, leave it alone—just turn it once.

Jeff Weinstein at the Counter recommends:

- Choose ground beef that contains 18%–20% fat.
- Wash your hands with cold water before handling the ground meat; you want to keep the fat in it cold.
- Put cold condiments such as lettuce, tomato, and pickles under the burger, and hot condiments on top.

Martha Gamble at the Apple Pan recommends:

- Use lettuce from the inner section of a head of iceberg, between the heart and the outer leaves.