Bifteck haché, sauté nature

*Sautéed Hamburgers with Wine, Cream, and Tomato Sauce*

*Serves 4-6*

Original recipe by Julia Child; courtesy of Sur La Table Chef Lynne Just, for demo on August 12, 2016

**For the burgers:**

2 pounds freshly ground lean beef chuck
½ teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
Optional James Beard enrichment: 2 to 4 tablespoons crème fraîche or heavy cream or butter
Olive oil or peanut oil

**For the sauce:**

2 tablespoons minced shallots or scallions
¼ cup red wine, white wine, or dry white French Vermouth
½ cup crème fraîche or heavy cream
1 tablespoon tomato paste
2 to 3 tablespoons minced fresh basil or parsley

Toss the beef with a fork to blend in the salt, pepper, and optional cream. Form into 4 cakes about 5 inches in diameter and 1 inch thick. (Wrap and refrigerate or freeze if done in advance.)

Film a large heavy frying pan (or electric skillet) with 1/16-inch oil and heat to very hot but not smoking; sauté the hamburgers 3 to 4 minutes on each side, depending on how rare you like them: for pinky rare, they will feel slightly springy when pressed, and a pearling of red juice will appear on the surface. Immediately remove hamburgers to a hot platter, or arrange on a bed of rice and onion *soubise*.

Spoon all but a tablespoon of cooking fat out of pan, add the shallots or scallions, and sauté a moment; deglaze with the wine (pour in the wine, and boil rapidly, scraping sauté pan juices into it with a wooden spoon). Add the cream and the tomato, and boil rapidly to thicken lightly. Swish in the herbs, pour the sauce over the hamburgers, and serve.