

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.

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