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**NEWS**



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**The Great American Burger**

*Celebrate July 4 with our national summertime favorite*

Behold the humble burger! While a few misguided food snobs may be quick to deride this simple masterpiece as mere “meat on a bun,” true aficionados know that a dish doesn’t need to be complicated to be sublime.

Indeed, the vast majority of Americans think burgers are a big deal. It’s estimated that burgers appear on more than 70 percent of restaurant menus across the USA, whether it’s the corner dive bar and grill or fronted by a celebrity chef. Debates range freely over whose burger is the best in town. And virtually every grill master wishes he had the secret to the country’s best backyard burger.

No matter how you choose to top it, meat-lovers agree the mighty burger is a craveable, mouthwatering, hand-held bundle of joy. It’s not rocket science, but there are some tips and tricks that the experts use to create perfect juicy burgers every time.

**Build a better burger**

Start with the best ground beef. Most chefs agree “80/20 ground chuck” – that’s beef ground exclusively from chuck cuts and trimmings and with an 80% lean to 20% fat ratio – is ideal. Some fat, as well as the marbling – the little white flecks of flavor – found inside the lean red meat, is necessary to deliver juicy burgers that don’t dry out on the grill.

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Look for *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> brand ground beef at retailers across the country. It must meet 10 scientific specifications in order to earn the name and deliver great taste in every bite. It's juicy, flavorful, and the stuff burger dreams are made of.

Shape ground beef gently into patties – don't overwork the meat, which can make it tough. There's no need to add any seasonings beyond a sprinkle of kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, letting the true beef flavor shine. As your grill preheats, let your patties lose the chill from the refrigerator. Then, when your grill is good and hot, it's time for the magic to begin.

Sear burgers on the grill, turning them gently with a spatula. Try not to move them too often, and be patient while they cook! It's tempting to want to hurry them along, but resist the urge to poke them or smash them down -- that will allow those delicious juices to escape. Use a meat thermometer in the center of the patty to determine doneness; when it reads 160°F, they're ready. Let burgers rest on a clean plate for a few minutes before serving while you gently toast the sliced buns.

Finally, the moment you've been waiting for arrives. Inhale the intoxicating aroma as you assemble your masterpiece. Sit back, dig in, savor the inimitable flavor ... smile, and offer silent thanks for the Great American Burger.

Sidebar:

**Declare your independence from the same-old, same-old**

The robust flavor of a thick, juicy burger is the perfect canvas for creative and innovative toppings. While there's nothing wrong with the classic winning combination of American cheese, ketchup and yellow mustard, don't be afraid to experiment.

For a gourmet twist, try any of the following combinations – or create your own!

- Roasted red peppers and soppressata (an Italian dry-cured salami)
- Blue cheese and cooked bacon
- Grilled portabella mushrooms and gouda cheese
- Mozzarella, marinara sauce and fresh basil
- Feta cheese and olive tapenade
- Manchego cheese and jalapenos
- Prosciutto and arugula
- Grilled pineapple and hot pepper jam
- Caramelized onions , spinach and brie cheese
- Salsa and pepper jack cheese

**Ground beef 101**

*Q: What does it mean when it says 80/20, 90/10, etc. on the label?*

*A: These numbers describe the ratio of lean meat to fat in that package of beef. Leading chefs prefer an 80% lean and 20% fat blend for a burger, for maximum flavor and juiciness.*

*Q: Why is ground beef sometimes labeled ground chuck, ground sirloin or ground round?*

A: These labels describe which cuts the ground beef is made from. Ground chuck is often the choice of beef experts because it has an ideal lean/fat ratio and great taste, but ground sirloin and ground round are high-quality choices that can also offer robust beef flavor. Ground round, in particular, can be a leaner option.

*Q: Is fresh or frozen ground beef better?*

A: It's a matter of preference. Some cooks believe ground beef that has never been frozen tastes better, while others can't tell a difference and appreciate the convenience.

*Q: How long should I cook ground beef?*

A: Ground beef should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 160°F. Use a meat thermometer to check; some fully cooked beef may still appear pink, while other beef may lose its pinkness before it reaches a safe temperature.

*Q: What other food safety tips should I remember?*

A: Promptly refrigerate ground beef within 2 hours of purchase (1 hour if the temperature is above 90°F). Cook or freeze ground beef within 2 days of purchase – and be sure to check the “use-by” date on the label. Always use the refrigerator to thaw frozen ground beef. As always, wash hands in hot, soapy water before and after handling raw meat. Wash all utensils, cutting boards, and counters that have touched raw foods. Any leftovers should be refrigerated quickly.

### **Mouthwatering Mini Burgers**

Chef's note: Mini burgers, or “sliders,” are all the rage and for good reason. These little cuties make a great appetizer, snack or kid-sized portion. If you prefer a larger burger, simply make four 6-ounce patties and use regular-sized buns. Either way, they pack big satisfaction in every bite!



#### **Ingredients**

- 1 1/2 pounds *Certified Angus Beef*® brand ground chuck
- 1 head Bibb lettuce, washed and separated
- 1 small red onion, sliced
- 8 silver dollar buns
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### **Instructions**

1. Form ground chuck into eight 3-ounce patties. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
2. Grill until meat thermometer placed in center of patties registers 160°F.
3. Build burgers by layering lettuce, red onion and patty on a bun.

Yield: 8 mini burgers

Nutritional information per serving (one mini burger): 240 Calories; 11g Fat; 4g Saturated Fat; 54mg Cholesterol; 16g Carbohydrate; 0g Dietary Fiber; 19g Protein; 209mg Sodium; 14% daily value Iron (based on 2,000 calorie diet).

Recipe provided by Certified Angus Beef LLC

For 30 years, the *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> brand has been world-famous for its exceptional quality and generous marbling. Ten strict scientific standards ensure each bite is full of mouthwatering flavor, tenderness and juiciness.

The *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> brand is a cut above USDA Prime, Choice and Select. It has offered consumers quality, consistency and integrity since the first pound was sold in 1978. Less than 8% of beef can achieve the brand's benchmark standards. It is proudly featured by more than 13,500 restaurants and retailers around the world. For more tips, recipes or information, visit [www.certifiedangusbeef.com](http://www.certifiedangusbeef.com).

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**Note to Editor:** Interviews with *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> brand Corporate Chef Scott Popovic and other beef experts are available upon request. Please call Jennifer Schertz to schedule.