

# Ideas for those hot summer nights

"You don't have to cook fancy or complicated masterpieces - just good food from fresh ingredients." - Julia Child



There are many things to love about summer: warm nights; day light savings; beach days; thunder storms; and the simplicity of cooking salads and barbeques most nights. Some of my favourite meals are: fish and chips with salad; roast vegetable pasta salad with chicken; greek meatballs with a greek salad and chap potatoes; rice and lentil salad with salmon steak; roast vegetable feta, chickpea and couscous salad; pear walnut feta and beetroot salad; this list could go on but one of our absolute favourites are hamburgers.

Homemade hamburgers are not only delicious but they can also be packed with lots of nutrients. Today I am going to share with you a recipe that my mum taught me and that I have adapted to our taste preferences. What I love about this recipe is that it is so easy and that if you use fresh ingredients you can freeze the burger patties raw and have them ready to go for another time. Now, I must confess that I am one of those annoying cooks, who often doesn't measure food and just goes with the flow. Thankfully I have made this recipe so many times that I usually add the same amount of each ingredient each time.

Here it is: All you need to do is combine 500g mincemeat (beef or lamb which ever you prefer) with one grated carrot and one grated zucchini and one-two tablespoons of wholegrain seeded mustard. Add one egg which you can whisk prior to adding or just whisk in the bowl, two tablespoons mixed herbs and 1 ½-2 cups of fresh bread crumbs. I usually blend up 2-4 pieces of bread depending on how moist the mixture is. If you add too much zucchini the mixture can become quite moist so don't use one of those really large zucchinis. Always use fresh bread crumbs otherwise the burger patties become too dry. I should mention that I prefer moist burger patties and therefore if you prefer really dry ones just add more bread crumbs. Now all you have to do is get your hands dirty and thoroughly combine all the above ingredients. For more flavour you can add a dash of salt and some pepper but if you have added enough seeded mustard and herbs the burgers should be full of flavour. This recipe is great for children, as they usually can't taste the zucchini and carrot in the burgers.

Now for the fillings: You can make these as simple or as fancy as you like. I usually go with what's in the fridge at the time. We love sautéed mushrooms and caramelised onion, sliced beetroot, tomato and cheese, rocket or spinach and sometimes even grilled eggplant and zucchini. You might be getting the picture that these burgers are massive, well they kind of are. But they are full of wonderful fresh vegetables which you can never have enough of. We like to use wholemeal chia rolls and usually spread a dip (like spinach and feta dip), avocado or a homemade tomato relish on the bread. This again gives the hamburgers extra flavour. So I hope by now your mouth is watering and all you can think about is going home and making this burgers! Well I'd love to hear what your favourite summer meals are and let me know if you try making these burger patties. I'd love to hear some feedback.

# Hamburgers

## Ingredients

- 250g beef mince
- 250g lamb mince
- 1 large grated carrot
- 1 small grated zucchini
- 1-2 tablespoons of wholegrain seeded mustard
- 2 tablespoons of mixed herbs
- 1 egg lightly beaten
- 1 ½ - 2 cups of fresh bread crumbs (2-4 slices of bread)
- Dash of salt and pepper to taste

## Fillings

- Sautéed mushrooms
- Caramelised onions
- Spinach or rocket
- Sliced beetroot
- Sliced tomato
- Sliced cheese
- Grilled eggplant
- Grilled zucchini
- Dip of choice to spread on burger bun or homemade relish
- Burger – chia wholemeal roll



*A selection of possible hamburger fillings.*

## Method

1. Place mincemeat, grated carrot and zucchini, 2 tablespoons of wholegrain seeded mustard, 2 tablespoons of mixed herbs, 1 ½ -2 cups of fresh bread crumbs and one whisked egg in to a large mixing bowl.
2. Combine all these ingredients thoroughly
3. Get a good size handful of the mixture and roll in to a ball. Then flatten to the equivalent of your palm size.
4. At this stage you can either cook the patties immediately or freeze them for another time.
5. Cook burger patties in a frying pan in some olive oil
6. Place burger in a roll with desired fillings and enjoy!

