

FOOD & DINING

Expand your hamburger horizons

Hamburgers are a beloved food that are perhaps most popular during summer, when grillmasters fire up their grills to feed guests at backyard barbecues. Though few might describe hamburgers as “versatile,” hamburgers are in fact just that. Chefs willing to stretch their burger boundaries can experiment with a host of ingredients to produce burgers that will be the talk of barbecue season.

While burgers made from lean ground beef will always hold a place in hamburger lovers’ hearts, men and women who want to expand their hamburger horizons can try the following recipe for “Venison Burgers” from Jon Bonnell’s “Texas Favorites” (Gibbs Smith).

VENISON BURGERS

Serves 8

- 2 pounds venison meat
- 1/2 pound pork shoulder
- 1/2 pound slab bacon
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons hot sauce
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Optional toppings

- Bacon
- Cheddar cheese
- Guacamole

Clean the venison well and remove any fat or connective tissue. Cut the venison, pork shoulder and bacon into large chunks. Combine all ingredients together in a large mixing bowl and let marinate for 1 hour in the refrigerator. Grind everything together using the small plate on your grinder. Form into burger patties by hand, and grill or pan-sear. Cook to medium (135 F internal temperature), then remove from the grill and top with your favorite cheese or burger toppings.

Chef’s note: Venison is an incredibly rich meat but also quite lean. It’s extremely important to take proper care of your venison in the field, as well as to trim away all fat and connective tissues when processing. Adding pork and pork fat helps give a somewhat dry meat more juice and gives a more approachable texture to these burgers.



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