

# Lamb Merguez Patties

## Ingredients

- ½ tsp salt
- ⅓ tsp sugar
- ⅓ tsp red chile pepper flakes
- 1 ¼ tsp coarsely ground black pepper
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground cloves
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp bittersweet smoked Spanish paprika (yes, it matters!)
- 2 tsp oregano leaves (dried is fine)
- 1 tsp finely minced garlic
- 2 tsp finely minced chives (dried is fine)
- ½ cup (scant) roasted red bell pepper, very finely minced
- 1 Tbs robust red wine, very cold
- 1 lb lean ground lamb, as cold as possible.
- Feta cheese to use as a topping.

## Technique

- 1) Mix the dry ingredients (up to oregano) well in a medium bowl and mix well.
- 2) Add the garlic, chives, red pepper, and wine. Mix again.
- 3) Add the lamb a small amount at a time, mixing constantly with a fork (or your hands, if you are making a larger batch. Work quickly.
- 4) Divide into 6 medium patties about 3" in diameter. Fry in a heavy skillet on high heat for about 4 minutes per side or until the internal temperature reaches 125 degrees. Each side should have a dark brown crust and the center should be pink.
- 5) Serve topped with a thin slice of feta cheese if desired.
- 6) These patties go well with couscous-mint-pine nuts-raisins, pureed squash, cooked spinach, cucumber-tomato-feta salad, or just about any Mediterranean side dish.

## Notes for making sausage

You can use this recipe for making sausage links. If you do, you will probably want to add a bit more salt and less wine to the mix. You might try ¾ tsp salt and 1 tsp wine per pound of meat. Depending on how lean your ground lamb is, you may want to add a bit of pork fat to the mix before stuffing. Natural lamb casings work best, but they are a little tricky to stuff without breaking them. Nonetheless, they are worth the effort. Natural hog casings are much easier to stuff, but they are rather large. I do not recommend that you use collagen casings.