

Umami Burger

After salty, sour, bitter and sweet, **umami** is considered our fifth sense of taste. Umami refers to the presence of glutamic acid, an amino acid with salty/savory characteristics. Its presence gives food more depth in flavour and character. Umami is present in many seafood products, Parmesan cheese, and meats - especially cured meats, like ham and bacon.



This burger uses **lean grassfed ground meat**, preferably bison, but grassfed beef also works well. The low fat levels of the meat require a distinct cooking method else they quickly dry out.

RECIPE COURTESY: PJ Duffin
(www.bisonbasics.com)

Prep: 15 minutes

Cook: 20 minutes

Yields: 5 Big Burgers

Ingredients

- 2 lbs ground **grassfed** beef or bison, 80 to 90% lean, medium texture preferred
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 - 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp rendered bacon fat, warmed slightly to a liquid state (*from 6 slices of pan-fried side bacon*)
- cheddar cheese, sliced or grated (*optional*)
- cooking oil (*grape seed, peanut, or sunflower preferred*) - **DO NOT use Olive Oil**

Method

- Break the grassfed ground meat up into small chunks by hand; spread the chunks evenly over a baking sheet. Sprinkle the ground meat with salt and pepper. Drizzle the rendered bacon fat over the meat chunks.
- Shape the seasoned ground meat into 5 patties measuring about 4 inches in diameter and little over an inch thick. Try not to handle the meat excessively while shaping it into burgers. Over-handling compacts the raw ground and can result in a cooked burger with increased density and a lack of tenderness.
- Place the burger patties on a baking sheet or large plate. Cover burgers loosely with some plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least an hour to allow the patties to set. *Patties can always be made well in advance.*
- Preheat one side of the barbecue so that a medium-hot grill surface temperature of **475-500F is maintained** on that side. The temperature can be checked using a grill surface thermometer

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or a laser thermometer. Even a regular coil-style oven thermometer can give relatively accurate grill surface temperature readings when the barbecue lid is closed. And when closed, the opposite side of the grill will have a grill surface temperature of approximately 325-350F.

NOTE: If using charcoal, the hot coals should be distributed on one side of the barbecue so that similar temperatures are maintained -- 475-500F on the medium-hot side & 325-350F on the cooler side.

- Brush a very small amount of cooking oil on the top side of the burgers and then quickly grease the preheated medium-hot side of the grill with a rag or paper towel soaked with some cooking oil.

Place the burgers on the medium-hot side of the grill and close the lid. Cook for 4 minutes without disturbing. Flip the burgers, close the lid, and continue to cook on the same medium-hot side of the grill for another 3 minutes.

NOTE: Except when the burgers are being flipped over, the barbecue lid should remain closed.

- Shift the burgers over to the cooler side of the grill, well away from the direct heat coming from the fire. Cook the burgers for another 6-7 minutes per side, or until an internal temperature of 155-156F is reached.

Best to check the temperature with an instant-read digital stick thermometer to be sure. Although not inexpensive, the THERMAPEN is tops in design and accuracy. Accurate readings within 1 degree Fahrenheit can be obtained in less than 3 seconds.

- For a cheeseburger, top burgers with grated cheese or cheese slices one minute before they come off the grill.
- After coming off the grill allow the burgers to rest 5-10 minutes before serving. Within the first 5 minutes of resting the internal meat temperature for the burgers will reach 160F. They are **well-done** and are at their best when done to this temperature - succulent and flavorful. Enjoy.

<https://www.globlog.ca/umamiburger.html>