Smashed Burgers with Special Sauce

SPECIAL SAUCE

⅓ cup mayonnaise

3 tablespoons tomato sauce

2 tablespoons finely chopped dill pickle

1 tablespoon spicy American mustard

1/4 teaspoon hot sauce, such as Tabasco

SEASONING SALT

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon sugar

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1/4 teaspoon onion powder

680 g beef mince

Canola or sunflower oil

4 sesame hamburger rolls, split

4 slices white onion, each 3 mm thick

4 slices ripe tomato, each about 5 mm thick

4 large iceberg or cos lettuce leaves, torn to fit rolls

A tiny bit of sugar in this home-made seasoning salt goes a long way towards browning the top and bottom of the burgers. This recipe is an exception to the rule never to smash the patties with a spatula. Here, the hotplate captures the juices and uses them to flavour the meat.

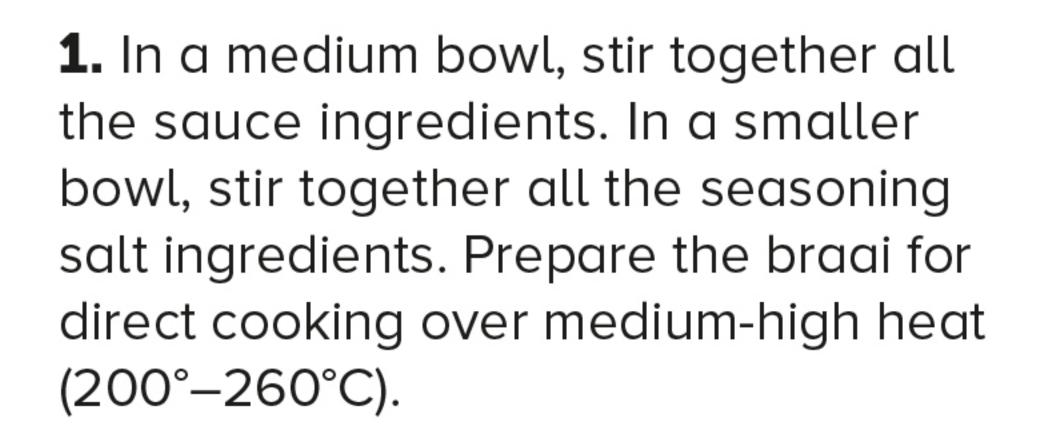






SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:
LARGE CAST-IRON HOTPLATE



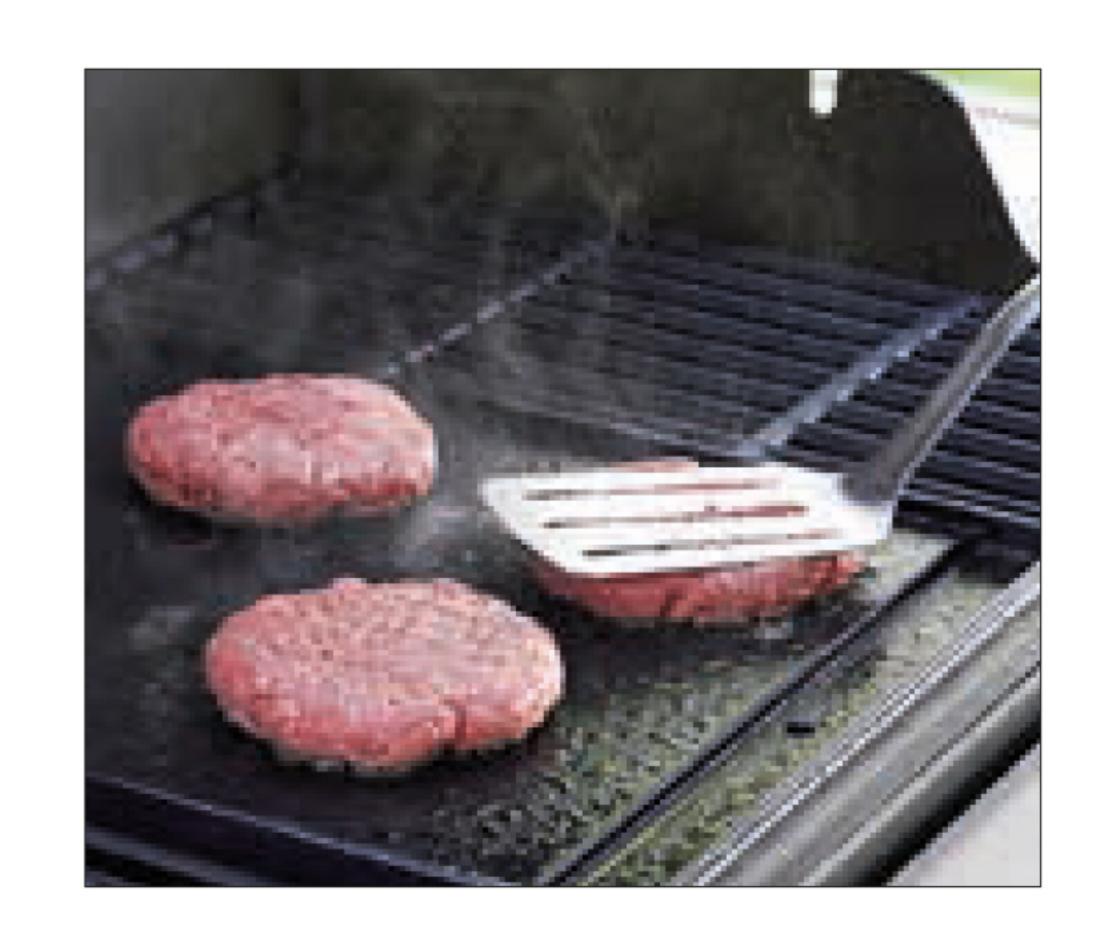




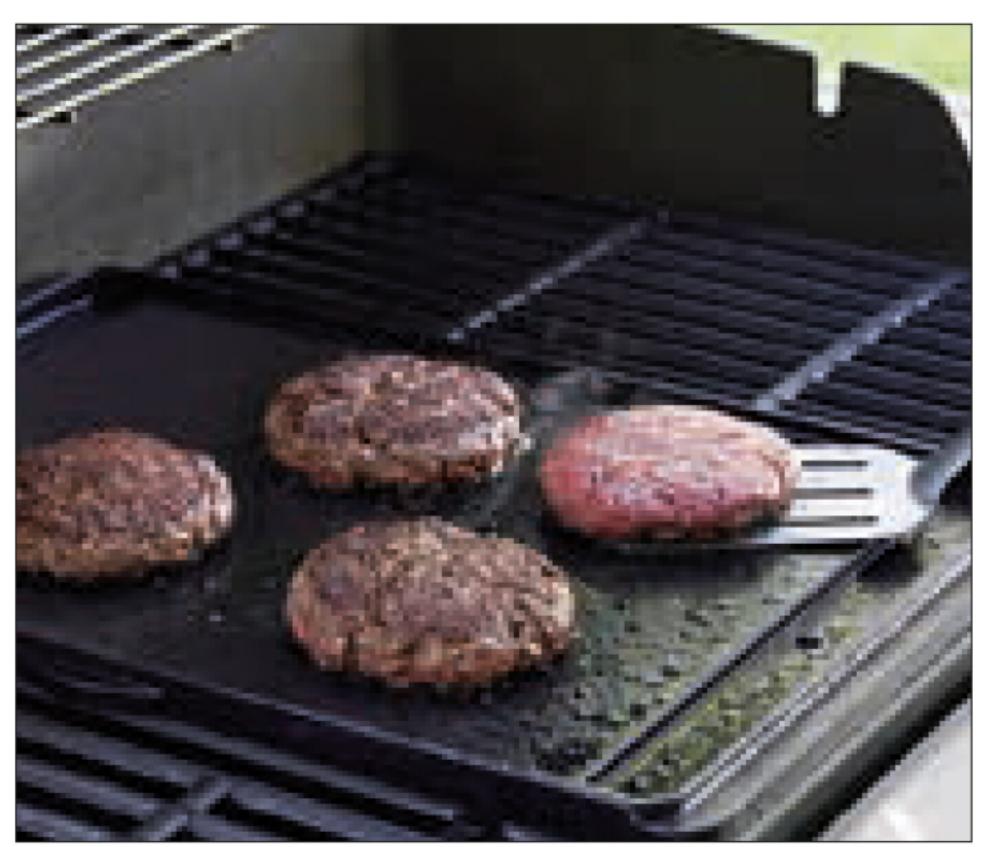
2. Brush the cooking grates clean. Place a cast-iron hotplate over direct heat, close the lid and preheat until very hot, 5–10 minutes. Shape the beef into four balls of equal size.



3. Using your hands, press each patty firmly and evenly to flatten it into a 10-cm round, about 1 cm thick. Season both sides evenly with the seasoning salt.



4. Lightly brush the hotplate with oil. Place the patties on the hotplate, spacing them well apart so you can turn them easily later. Using a spatula, smash each patty to flatten it to about 8 mm thick. This will help create a deliciously browned crust. Cook over **direct medium-high heat**, with the lid closed, for 3–4 minutes.



5. Using a clean spatula, scrape the patties from the hotplate, keeping the browned crust on the underside as intact as possible, and flip them over. Cook, with the lid closed, until the second side is browned and the patties are cooked to medium (70°C), 3–4 minutes.



6. During the final minute of grilling time, toast the rolls, cut side down, on the area around the hotplate. To build the burgers, spread the bottom half of each roll with some sauce, top with a patty, then add an onion slice, a tomato slice and lettuce. Spread the top half of the roll with more sauce and close the burger. Serve at once.