

Jill Gilber, New York — The Cherry Best Burger

Wine Pairing: Cabernet Sauvignon

INGREDIENTS:

Patties:

- 2 Pounds ground beef (80/20)
- ¾ Cup dried, pitted cherries
- ½ Teaspoon granulated garlic powder
- ½ Teaspoon salt and pepper (each burger)

Sweet & Smoky Cabernet Ketchup:

- 1 Cup of ketchup
- 3 Tablespoons adobo sauce (from a 12 ounce can of chipotle peppers)
- 1/3 Cup plus 1 tablespoon dark brown sugar
- ¼ Cup Sutter Home Cabernet Sauvignon
- 1 Teaspoon granulated onion powder
- 1 Teaspoon sea salt
- 1 Teaspoon ground black pepper

Shallots:

- 5 Large shallots, sliced into thin rings
- 1 Teaspoon reserved bacon grease
- 3 Tablespoons of salted butter
- 3 Tablespoons Sutter Home Cabernet Sauvignon (reserved from soaked cherries)

Other Ingredients:

- 6 Brioche hamburger buns, sliced horizontally
- 1 ½ Cups extra sharp white cheddar cheese, shredded
- 12 Slices bacon, each slice halved
- 1 Large bunch watercress, rinsed and dried

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat your grill, that has been cleaned and the grates oiled, to medium heat
2. Place a 9 to 12-inch cast iron skillet or cast-iron flat griddle onto grill grates to get HOT! Note: make sure handle has protective covering to prevent burning yourself
3. While grill is heating, place dried cherries into a small bowl and pour in ¾ cup of Sutter Home Cabernet Sauvignon
4. Keep covered with plastic and set aside until burger mixture requires further attention
5. Next, place all of the ketchup ingredients into a 1-quart oven safe saucepan
6. Make sure the handle has protective covering to prevent burning yourself
7. Combine all well, stirring occasionally for 5 to 7 minutes
8. Ketchup will turn a deeper red color
9. Remove from grill, keep covered for later
10. While ketchup is cooking, thinly slice your shallots into rings; set aside
11. Now add your bacon to the HOT cast iron pan and cook until crispy (7 to 10 minutes), turning occasionally

12. Once cooked, remove bacon, drain on paper towel and keep covered with foil
13. Reserve only 1 teaspoon of the bacon grease in the pan and discard the rest
14. Leave pan on grill and temporarily lower temperature under pan. Keep the temperature low enough to keep bacon grease from burning until needed for shallots
15. While the bacon is cooking, drain cherries well
16. Reserve the wine liquid for sautéed shallots
17. Finely chop the cherries in a small food processor, then add them to the ground beef in a large bowl
18. Add the garlic powder, salt and pepper into the bowl and combine well without over mixing the burger meat
19. Divide meat mixture into 6 evenly sized round shaped patties
20. Make a small indent with your thumb into the center of the patty to maintain evenly shaped burgers while cooking
21. Generously salt and pepper both sides of the burger
22. Place burgers onto a parchment lined tray
23. Cover with foil and keep cool in refrigerator until grill time
24. Turn the heat under the cast iron pan back up to medium heat
25. Add the butter and combine with bacon grease using a wooden spoon
26. Add the shallots to the pan and sauté until soft, about 4 to 5 minutes
27. Once soft, add the 3 tablespoons of reserved Sutter Home Cabernet Sauvignon, stirring occasionally until liquid has completely cooked off
28. Remove pan from grill, cover with foil, and set shallots aside until burger assembly
29. Finally, place all the burgers onto the grill
30. Cook 4 to 5 minutes per side for medium temperature
31. Top each burger with ¼ cup of the shredded cheese during the last two minutes of cooking time
32. Close lid of grill to promote melting of cheese
33. With one minute remaining, dip the interior side of both the top and bottom half of each bun into the pan with the cooked shallots
34. Lightly coat with the pan grease and place on grill to toast

Assembly:

35. Spread bottom half of brioche bun with sweet and smoky cabernet ketchup
36. Place burger onto bun
37. Add the sautéed shallots, followed by 4 halved pieces of bacon and a small handful of watercress
38. Spread top half of brioche bun with the sweet & smoky cabernet ketchup, and top the burger
39. Be sure to pour yourself a glass of Sutter Home Cabernet Sauvignon to enjoy along with "The Cherry Best Burger" around!