



SMASHED BURGERS

Smashed burgers are one of my favorite things to make on the griddle grill. Using freshly ground chuck with a good amount of fat and minimal seasoning allows the natural beef flavors to shine. Smashing the burger onto the griddle surface increases the surface area to promote browning in the beef and helps develop a deliciously flavorful crust. To achieve the perfect smashed burger, you'll need parchment paper, a bacon press, and a heavy-duty spatula.

Serves 4

4 burger buns

4 slices American cheese

1 pound ground chuck (80/20), divided
into 4-ounce balls

salt and pepper, to taste

1. Bring the griddle grill to high heat. Cut 4 squares of parchment paper. Butter the grill surface and toast the insides of the burger buns for 1 to 2 minutes until a golden brown crust forms and the bun has warmed. Set aside.

2. Scrape your griddle surface clean with a scraper or spatula. Place the ground beef balls on the griddle surface, spacing them 6 to 8 inches apart. Place a parchment paper square down on one of the ground beef balls, and smash it to about ¼ inch thick with a bacon press. Remove parchment paper, and repeat with the remaining beef balls. Season the raw sides of the burgers liberally with salt and pepper.



3. Allow the smashed beef to cook for about 2 minutes without disturbing. Hold a heavy-duty spatula and scrape under the burger to release it from the griddle and take all of the browned bits with it. Flip the burger, and quickly repeat with the others.



4. Cover the burgers with cheese slices and allow to cook for an additional 2 minutes, or until the cheese begins to melt. If you desire the cheese to be extra melty, cover the burgers after the cheese is added.



5. Using your heavy-duty spatula, scrape each burger again at an aggressive angle to release from the griddle and slide them onto your browned burger buns.

6. You can dress these burgers up with lettuce, tomato, onion, and a variety of condiments or sauces, but I prefer to just enjoy the rich, meaty flavor of the burger, and the smooth mouthfeel of the buttery toasted bun.

Burgers

Few foods spark as much nostalgia as the burger. Burgers are quick, convenient, and typically inexpensive. But what they lack in cost, they make up for in flavor, and they're all a little bit different. Sure the meat, seasonings, toppings, and buns have something to do with how the burgers taste, but the way the meat is cooked, and what it is cooked on, makes all the difference. Some diners, burger shacks, and roadside stands have been cooking on the same flat-top grill daily for decades, and it leaves an unmistakably delicious flavor on the food, which you can replicate at home with your griddle grill.