

## HEALTH

# Suvir Saran's Mushroom and Farro Burger

By MARTHA ROSE SHULMAN MAY 12, 2014

When I was introduced to these burgers, a creation of the chef Suvir Saran, I was struck by the brilliant idea of using sweet potatoes as a binder. I've struggled to find ways to hold my burgers together, and this solution was perfect. Try to find light-fleshed sweet potatoes; they are drier, and a little less sweet than orange yams. I also love all the textures in these hearty patties. I have made some changes to Suvir's recipe, roasting the potatoes rather than boiling them, and I use less oil.

**Total time:** About 1 hour 10 minutes, plus at least 1 hour of chilling

1 pound pale-fleshed sweet potatoes or regular potatoes (such as Yukon gold), baked  
3/4 cup farro (see note)

Salt to taste

6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 fresh rosemary sprig

1 fresh thyme sprig

1 teaspoon ground black pepper

3/4 cup finely chopped peanuts

1 pound cremini mushroom caps, finely chopped

3 shallots, finely chopped

1 tablespoon dry white wine

1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan

1 cup panko or chickpea flour (you will not use all of it)

**1.** Bake potatoes in a 425-degree oven as directed. When tender, remove from the oven, allow to cool until you can handle them, peel and place in a bowl. Mash with a fork.

**2.** While potatoes are baking, cook the farro. Combine with 3 cups water in a

medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, add salt to taste and cover. Reduce heat and simmer 50 to 60 minutes, until grains are tender and beginning to splay. Drain well and set aside.

**3.** Remove needles and leaves from rosemary and thyme sprigs and place in a large frying pan with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Add pepper and heat over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until the herbs begin to crackle. Add chopped peanuts and cook for 2 minutes, or until golden and fragrant, and stir in chopped mushrooms and about 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt (or to taste). Cook, stirring often, until mushrooms have released all of their liquid and there is no more liquid in the pan, about 8 minutes. Stir in wine and continue to cook, stirring, until there is again no liquid left in the pan. Remove from heat and transfer to the bowl with the potatoes.

**4.** Heat another tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat in the pan and add shallots. Cook until tender and beginning to brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat and scrape shallots into bowl with mushrooms and potatoes. Add farro and Parmesan and mash everything together. Add salt and pepper, taste and adjust seasonings.

**5.** Take up a heaped 1/3 cup of the mixture and form into a ball (you can wet your hands to reduce sticking). Roll ball in panko or chickpea flour, then gently flatten into a patty. Set on a plate and continue with remaining burger mixture. Refrigerate uncovered for 1 hour or longer (the longer the better).

**6.** When you're ready to cook, place a rack over a sheet pan. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a 12-inch, heavy nonstick frying pan over high heat. Swirl the pan to coat with the hot oil. Lower heat to medium. Place 4 to 5 patties in the pan (do not crowd), and cook until well browned on one side, about 4 minutes. Turn and brown for about 4 more minutes. Remove to rack. Heat remaining oil in the pan and cook remaining patties. Keep patties warm in a low oven until ready to serve. Serve with a salad and your choice of toppings, such as the usual (ketchup, mustard, relish), or yogurt raita, garlic yogurt, or chutney.

**Yield:** 10 patties

**Advance preparation:** You can form the patties and keep them refrigerated for up to 2 days, or cook them all the way through and keep them refrigerated for 2 or 3 days. Reheat on a baking sheet in a low oven for 10 to 15 minutes. The patties freeze well. Thaw completely before reheating.

**Note:** The farro will cook a little faster if you soak it for an hour in boiling water to cover. Place it in a bowl, pour on boiling water and leave for 1 hour, then drain.

**Nutritional information per burger:** 272 calories; 15 grams fat; 3 grams saturated fat; 3 grams polyunsaturated fat; 9 grams monounsaturated fat; 4 milligrams cholesterol; 28 grams carbohydrates; 4 grams dietary fiber; 108 milligrams sodium (does not include salt to taste); 9 grams protein

*Martha Rose Shulman is the author of “The Very Best of Recipes for Health.”*

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