

Homemade Hamburger Helper

By Priya Krishna

YIELD 4 servings

TIME 1 hour 15 minutes

Think of this as the most luxurious Hamburger Helper you've ever had. It's how Mark Rosati, the culinary director of Shake Shack, turns leftover ground beef into a complete weeknight dinner. The entire dish — even the pasta — is made in one pot, and melds the indelible comfort of macaroni and cheese with the complexity of a good Bolognese. This definitely has a kick, so adjust the hot sauce according to taste.

INGREDIENTS

¼ cup neutral oil, such as canola or vegetable

1 large yellow onion, diced into 1/2-inch pieces

Kosher salt and black pepper

3 garlic cloves, minced

5 strips uncooked smoked bacon, finely chopped

1 pound ground beef

1 cup dry white wine

3 cups chicken stock or water

¾ cup heavy cream

¼ to ⅓ cup hot sauce

2 teaspoons hot smoked paprika

1 bay leaf

8 ounces elbow pasta

5 slices American cheese, ripped into small pieces

1 ½ cups grated Cheddar

½ cup finely chopped chives

PREPARATION

Step 1

Heat a large (12-inch) sauté pan or Dutch oven over medium-low heat, and add oil and onion; season lightly with salt and pepper. (The hot sauce added in Step 6 will add a lot of flavor, so be careful not to overseason here.) Let cook until the onions turn light beige in color and begin to caramelize, 20 to 25 minutes.

Step 2

Add garlic, and cook until fragrant and starting to brown ever so slightly, about 2 minutes.

Step 3

Increase heat to medium-high and add bacon and ground beef, using the back of a large spoon to break up the meat into smaller pieces. Continue to cook until the liquid has mostly evaporated and the meat starts to sear and develop a crust on the bottom of the pan, 12 to 15 minutes.

Step 4

Remove pan from the heat and carefully drain off most of the fat, leaving a little in the pan to keep the meat moist.

Step 5

Return pan to the medium-high heat and add white wine, allowing it to reduce until the mixture is almost dry, about 10 minutes.

Step 6

Add the chicken stock, heavy cream, hot sauce, paprika and bay leaf to the pan. Mix until combined and bring to a boil over medium-high.

Step 7

Once the mixture is boiling, add the pasta and cook until al dente, stirring often, about 9 minutes.

Step 8

Reduce the heat to low and stir in both types of cheese, stirring until completely melted and sauce is thickened.

Step 9

Remove the pan from heat, stir in chives and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

PRIVATE NOTES

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