



SOUTHERN » COOKING GLOBAL « FLAVORS

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Carlotta's Euclid Creek Burger with Hand-Cut Steak Fries

My mother, Carlotta, is the eldest of seven children. My grandmother was a diabetic, and she had to eat well-balanced meals with snacks in between throughout the day. My mother learned to cook out of necessity in order to care for her family, and she always brought bold flavor to the table. All I knew growing up was food that was well-seasoned, and my mom's burger recipe bursts with flavor. I grew up in Euclid, Ohio, and we celebrated summer holidays with cookouts. This burger reminds me of good times with family and friends.

Some people are burger purists and just use salt and pepper to season. This works great with a smash burger, which is a thinner patty seared on both sides. A thick, juicy burger needs to be seasoned throughout so every bite is flavorful . . . because every bite matters.

INGREDIENTS

SERVES 6

FOR THE STEAK FRIES

- 1 tablespoon Chef Kennys' Raging Cajun Spice, or other Cajun seasoning
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- 6 russet potatoes, scrubbed
- 4 cups peanut oil

FOR THE BURGER

- 2¼ pounds (70/30) ground beef
- 1 medium white or yellow onion, diced (1 cup)
- 1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and diced (1 cup)
- 4 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, grated (1 cup)
- ¼ cup Worcestershire sauce, preferably Lea & Perrins
- ¼ cup yellow mustard
- 1 tablespoon Lawry's Seasoned Salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon granulated garlic
- 12 slices American cheese

FOR THE BUILD

- 6 onion burger buns or kaiser rolls (plain or sesame)
- Mayonnaise
- Ketchup
- Yellow mustard
- 6 pieces iceberg lettuce
- 6 (¼-inch-thick) slices red onion
- 6 (¼-inch-thick) slices tomato
- 12 dill pickle chips



DIRECTIONS

Make the Steak Fries

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F.
2. Combine the Cajun seasoning, salt, and sugar in a small bowl, mixing well. Set aside.
3. Bake the potatoes on a sheet pan for about 1 hour, until easily pierced with a knife. Remove from the oven and reduce the oven temperature to 170 F. Allow the potatoes to cool to room temperature.
4. Once cool, cut the potatoes lengthwise into large wedges.
5. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven on medium, or in a tabletop deep-fat fryer, and bring to 375 F.
6. Carefully place a small handful of potato wedges into the hot oil and fry for 2 minutes, or until golden brown. Use a long-handled strainer or spider to transfer the fries to a large bowl.
7. Season the fries with the Cajun seasoning mix while they are still hot. Continue with the remaining potatoes. Transfer to a sheet pan and keep warm in the oven.

Make the Burger

1. Preheat a charcoal or gas grill to medium-high heat. Or, if making on the stovetop, preheat a cast-iron skillet on medium-high for at least 5 minutes.
2. Combine the ground beef, onion, bell pepper, cheddar cheese, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, seasoned salt, black pepper, and granulated garlic in a large bowl, kneading gently with your hands until the ingredients are well incorporated.
3. Form 6 patties about ½ inch thick and place on a sheet pan.
4. Transfer the burgers to the grill or skillet and cook for 4 minutes per side for medium doneness, or until the desired doneness.
5. Top each burger with 2 slices of cheese and cover the grill or skillet for 1 minute, until the cheese has melted.

The Build

1. Line up the buns and add a generous tablespoon each of mayonnaise, ketchup, and mustard to the bottom buns.
2. Put a piece of lettuce, tomato, and onion on the bottom buns, then top with a cheesy burger patty. Put 2 dill pickle chips on top of each burger and finish with the top buns. Enjoy with the steak fries and ketchup.



Wasabi, Honey, and Soy-Glazed Baby Back Ribs with Pineapple, Jicama, and Pickled Ginger Slaw

I grew up eating pork ribs in Ohio, which is traditional in the Midwestern United States as well as in the South. If I were from Texas, though, I'd probably have grown up eating beef ribs. Different parts of America have different rib styles and barbecue sauce preferences. Down in the Deep South, barbecue sauce tends to be sweeter, while in North Carolina it is vinegar based. Hawaii is an entirely different story when it comes to barbecue. Pork is the primary meat featured, and the barbecue sauce reflects the Asian immigrant influence on the culture there. The wasabi, honey, and soy glaze in this recipe were inspired by a sauce from a Hawaiian chef friend, who learned it from Asian Americans in Hawaii. There is a gentle balance between wasabi and soy flavors in this sauce, which is totally cravable. Pork is the best meat to allow these ingredients to shine.

SERVES 6

FOR THE WASABI, HONEY, AND SOY GLAZE

Makes 4 cups

- 1 cup wasabi paste
- 2 cups honey
- 1 cup low-sodium soy sauce

FOR THE RIBS

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup coconut sugar
- 3 tablespoons ground ginger
- 1 tablespoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground white pepper
- Kosher salt
- 3 slabs St. Louis-style ribs
- 3 cups Wasabi, Honey, and Soy Glaze (see above)

FOR THE SLAW

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mayonnaise
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup honey
- Juice of 2 or 3 limes ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 8 ounces napa cabbage, grated (2 cups)
- 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces pineapple, cut into small dice (1 cup)
- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces jicama, sliced (1 cup)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ medium red bell pepper, seeded and cut into small dice ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ medium red onion, chopped ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ bunch cilantro, chopped ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- 3 tablespoons chopped pickled ginger

FOR THE BUILD

- 3 limes, cut into wedges
- 1 pineapple, peeled, cored, and cut into wedges



DIRECTIONS

Make the Wasabi, Honey, and Soy Glaze

Whisk the wasabi, honey, and soy sauce in a small saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 15 minutes at a low simmer. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Make the Ribs

1. Preheat the oven to 300 F and line two sheet pans with foil.
 2. Mix the coconut sugar, ginger, turmeric, white pepper, and salt to taste in a small bowl.
 3. Season the ribs on both sides with the coconut sugar blend and place on the prepared sheet pans.
 4. Cook the ribs for 1½ to 2 hours, or until they reach an internal temperature of 165 F. Remove the ribs but keep the oven on.
 5. Transfer each of the slabs to a large sheet of foil, backbone side down. Pour 1 cup of the glaze over each slab and wrap them in the foil.
 6. Return the ribs to the oven and cook for an additional 1¼ hours, or until they reach an internal temperature of 195 F.
 7. Rest the foil-wrapped cooked ribs in a cooler (without ice) for a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 3 hours before serving.
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Make the Slaw

1. Whisk the mayonnaise, sour cream, honey, lime juice, and salt in a large bowl.
 2. Add the cabbage, pineapple, jicama, bell pepper, onion, cilantro, and pickled ginger and toss to combine.
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The Build

1. Preheat a grill to medium-high. Put the halved limes and pineapple wedges on the grill. Cook 3 to 5 minutes on each side, or until lightly charred.
2. Using a sharp chef's knife, cut the slabs of ribs into three-rib portions. Be sure to cut close to the bone of the next rib; that way every rib will have meat on the bone.
3. Place three ribs on a plate. Put some barbecue sauce in a small cup on the plate along with some of the slaw. Garnish with grilled lime and pineapple wedges. Repeat for the remaining servings.



Black Bean Quinoa Burger with Baby Artichoke and Fingerling Potato Fries

Texture and seasoning are the two things that can make or break a veggie burger. I love quinoa. It is high in protein, great for texture, and tastes delicious when seasoned. It pairs well with black beans, which add nice color and rich flavor to a veggie burger. The xanthan gum in this recipe binds the burger ingredients together. This recipe allows for a little flexibility, so try working in seasonal vegetables, like butternut squash in the fall. Experiment with it and have some fun.

SERVES 6

FOR THE LEMON AIOLI

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- Juice of 2 lemons (¼ cup)
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon garlic paste
- 1 teaspoon lemon pepper

FOR THE FRIES

- 12 fingerling potatoes or heirloom baby potatoes, halved lengthwise
- 4 cups grapeseed oil, or canola or corn oil
- 2 (14-ounce) cans quartered baby artichokes, drained and patted dry (2 cups)
- 2 cups potato starch
- Kosher salt

FOR THE BURGER

- ¼ cup grapeseed oil
- ½ medium yellow onion, cut into small dice (½ cup)
- 1 medium carrot, diced (½ cup)
- 2 ribs celery, cut into small dice (½ cup)
- ½ cup chopped white button mushrooms
- ¼ cup chopped garlic (4 to 6 cloves)
- 1 cup cooked red quinoa (prepare according to package instructions)
- 2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, drained (3 cups)
- 1 bunch cilantro, leaves cut into thin ribbons (1 cup)
- ¼ cup potato starch
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup mild olive oil or vegetable oil

FOR THE BUILD

- 6 slices heirloom tomato
- 3 avocados, halved, pitted, and sliced
- Kosher salt
- 6 ciabatta buns, halved and toasted
- 3 cups loosely packed baby Tuscan kale



DIRECTIONS

Make the Lemon Aioli

Whisk the mayonnaise, lemon juice, mustard, garlic paste, and lemon pepper in a small bowl. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

Make the Fries

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F.
 2. Put the potatoes on a sheet pan and bake for 20 minutes, or until easily pierced with a knife. Remove the potatoes and reduce the oven temperature to 170 F. Cool the potatoes to room temperature.
 3. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven on medium, or in a tabletop deep-fat fryer, and bring to 375 F.
 4. In a large bowl, toss the potatoes and artichokes with the potato starch until fully coated.
 5. Carefully put a small handful of potatoes and artichokes into the hot oil. Fry for about 2 minutes, until golden brown. Use a long-handled strainer or spider to transfer the potatoes and artichokes to a sheet pan; season with salt to taste and keep warm in the oven. Continue with the remaining potatoes and artichokes.
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Make the Burgers

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F.
 2. Heat a large cast-iron or nonstick skillet on medium for 1 minute, then coat with the grapeseed oil. Put the onion, carrot, celery, mushrooms, and garlic in the skillet and cook for 2 minutes, or until softened, stirring constantly.
 3. Transfer the vegetables to a large bowl, then add the quinoa. Set aside. Clean the skillet.
 4. Put the black beans in a food processor with metal blade and process for 1 minute, until pureed but still slightly chunky. Add the pureed black beans to the bowl with the vegetables and quinoa, then add the cilantro, potato starch, and salt. Mix with your hands until well combined. Form 6 patties $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick and place on a plate.
 5. Heat the skillet on medium-high. Coat the skillet with the olive oil, add the burgers, and sear for 1 to 2 minutes per side. You may need to do this in batches.
 6. Once all the burgers are seared, transfer to a sheet pan and bake for 7 minutes.
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The Build

1. Season the tomato and avocado with salt.
2. Spread some of the lemon aioli on a bottom bun. Layer kale and heirloom tomato on the bun. Place the burger on top of the tomato, then arrange avocado slices on the burger. Spread some of the aioli on the top bun and place it on the avocado. Plate the remaining servings. Enjoy with the artichoke and potato fries and the remaining aioli for dipping.



Gilbert's BBQ Chicken with Anna's Mac & Cheese

When my wife, Anna, and I opened our first restaurant together, Gilbert's Underground Kitchen, we knew we had to have mac & cheese on the menu. People loved it, but Anna always felt it was missing something. One day I watched her make her mac & cheese. She added a cheese combination similar to my pimento cheese and a new variation was born.

SERVES 6

FOR THE BBQ SAUCE

Makes 4 cups

- 2 cups ketchup
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ cup molasses
- Juice of 3 lemons (¼ cup)
- Juice of 1 navel orange (¼ cup)
- ¼ cup packed light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons Chef Kennys Raging Cajun Spice, or other Cajun seasoning
- 1 tablespoon Chef Kennys Fried Chicken Seasoning, or other poultry seasoning
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

FOR THE BBQ CHICKEN

- ½ cup corn oil
- ¼ cup Chef Kennys Fried Chicken Seasoning, or other poultry seasoning
- ¼ cup Chef Kennys Raging Cajun Spice, or other Cajun seasoning
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 12 jumbo chicken legs
- 1 cup BBQ Sauce (see above)

FOR THE MAC & CHEESE

For the Black Pepper Cheese Sauce

Makes 6 cups

- 3 cups half-and-half
- 1 cup lager
- 2 tablespoons freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- ½ cup fried shallots, preferably Maesri
- ½ cup fried garlic, preferably Maesri

- 4 ounces (½ block) cream cheese
- 2 ounces Colby Jack cheese, shredded (½ cup)
- 2 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, shredded (½ cup)
- 2 ounces pepper Jack cheese, shredded (½ cup)
- 2 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded (½ cup)
- ¼ teaspoon xanthan gum

For the Pimento Cheese

Makes 2½ cups

- ½ cup cottage cheese
- 4 ounces (½ block) cream cheese
- 2 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded (½ cup)
- 2 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, shredded (½ cup)
- ¼ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup Chef Kennys South Carolina Mustard BBQ Sauce or Sweet Baby Rays Golden Mustard Barbecue Sauce
- 2 tablespoons Chef Kennys Raging Cajun Spice, or other Cajun seasoning
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

For the Gratin

- Kosher Salt
- 1 pound medium pasta shells
- 4 cups Black Pepper Cheese Sauce, warmed (see left)
- 2 cups Pimento Cheese (see above)
- 4 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded (1 cup)
- 4 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, shredded (1 cup)
- 4 ounces pepper Jack cheese, shredded (1 cup)

FOR THE BUILD

- Sliced scallions, for garnish
- Chef Kennys Raging Cajun Spice, or other Cajun seasoning for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Make the BBQ Sauce

In a large bowl, whisk together the ketchup, apple cider vinegar, molasses, lemon juice, orange juice, brown sugar, Cajun spice blend, chicken seasoning, cinnamon, and salt. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use. (Leftover sauce can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator.)

Make the Chicken

1. Whisk the oil, chicken and Cajun seasonings, lemon juice, and salt in a large bowl.
 2. Put the chicken legs in the bowl with the marinade and toss to thoroughly coat. Marinate the chicken, covered in the refrigerator, for a minimum of 2 hours and up to 12 hours.
 3. Preheat a smoker or the oven to 350 F.
 4. Place the chicken legs directly on the smoker or cook them on a sheet pan in the oven. Cook for 40 minutes, or until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the leg reaches 155 F.
 5. Baste the chicken with the barbecue sauce. Cook the chicken 25 to 30 minutes longer, to an internal temperature of 165 F. If using a smoker, transfer the smoked chicken to a sheet pan. Cover the chicken with foil to keep warm.
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Make the Mac & Cheese

Make the Black Pepper Cheese Sauce

1. Combine the half-and-half, lager, pepper, and salt in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil on medium-high heat.
2. Put the fried shallots, fried garlic, cream cheese, Colby Jack, Monterey Jack, pepper Jack, Cheddar, and xanthan gum in another medium saucepan.
3. Pour the half-and-half mixture over the cheese blend and allow the cheese to melt naturally for 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Over low heat, puree the cheese mixture with a handheld stick blender until smooth and warm throughout. Rewarm before assembling the mac & cheese.

Make the Pimento Cheese

1. Put the cottage cheese, cream cheese, Cheddar, Monterey Jack, sour cream, mustard barbecue sauce, Cajun spice blend, and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer with the paddle attachment (or you can combine the ingredients in a large bowl and mix with a spoon).
2. Mix on low speed for 30 seconds, then increase the speed to medium and mix for 1 minute, until thoroughly combined. Transfer to a bowl, cover, and refrigerate until ready to use.

Make the Gratin

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook for 8 to 11 minutes, until just under al dente, stirring occasionally.
2. Drain the pasta and return it to the pot along with the rewarmed cheese sauce and the pimento cheese.



3. Cook on low to medium heat, stirring until the pimento cheese melts. Transfer the cheesy pasta to a large casserole. Preheat the broiler.
4. Toss together the cheddar, Monterey Jack, and pepper Jack in a medium bowl. Sprinkle the cheese blend over the pasta.
5. Place the casserole under the broiler for 1 to 2 minutes, or until the cheese is bubbling and golden brown.

The Build

1. Place a large scoop of mac & cheese in the center of a dinner plate. Sprinkle scallions over the mac & cheese. Place 2 chicken legs to one side of the mac & cheese.
2. Sprinkle a dash of Cajun spice over the chicken. Plate the remaining servings.