

THE CHEF: SUZANNE GOIN

A Pork Burger That Does the Salsa

PORK BURGERS

Adapted from Suzanne Goin

Time: 55 minutes

- 1½ teaspoons cumin seed
- Olive oil
- ¾ cup diced shallots
- 2 small chiles de árbol, thinly sliced diagonally, or any dried chili; see note
- Kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons thyme leaves
- 3 cups ground pork (about 1½ pounds)
- ½ cup Mexican chorizo in small pieces; see note
- 1 cup finely chopped applewood smoked bacon (about ½ pound)
- ¼ cup roughly chopped parsley
- Black pepper
- Aioli and romesco sauce (optional)
- 6 brioche buns or floury hamburger buns
- 16 arugula leaves.

1. Pour cumin into a small pan, and place over medium heat. Cook, swirling, until seeds begin to toast, then pound coarsely in a mortar.

2. Cover bottom of a medium sauté pan with a thick slick of oil. Place over medium-low heat, and add shallots. When oil begins to sizzle, add the cumin and chiles. Stir, then season with salt. When shallots become

translucent, stir in thyme leaves, and turn off heat.

3. In a bowl, combine pork, chorizo and bacon. Add shallot mixture and parsley. Season with salt and pepper. Using your hands, lift and fold ingredients together until blended. Do not overmix.

4. Cover bottom of a medium sauté pan with a thin layer of oil, and place over medium-high heat. Form meat into patties that will fit buns; do not make them too thick.

5. Sauté burgers until browned on bottom. Turn them, basting with fat in pan. When browned on both sides, cut a slit in one patty to check doneness; it should be only slightly pink.

6. Toast insides of buns in a pan with a little oil. Spread with aioli and romesco, if using, or mayonnaise. Lay a burger on each bun; top with arugula leaves. Serve.

Yield: 6 servings.

Note: Available at Hispanic specialty stores or at Kitchen Market, 218 Eighth Avenue (21st Street): (212) 243-4433, (888) 468-4433 or www.kitchenmarket.com.



Photographs by Marissa Roth for The New York Times

By AMANDA HESSER

LOS ANGELES

SUZANNE GOIN has a cooking résumé that would make most aspiring chefs groan. Her career began here, at Ma Maison, when she was just 17, and rambled on to Al Forno in Providence, R.I.; Chez Panisse in Berkeley, Calif.; Arpège in Paris; Michela's in Boston; and back to Los Angeles at Campanile, among others.

In person, Ms. Goin does not quite fit the part of the ambitious, indefatigable, high-powered chef. She is a slight woman with touches of Audrey Hepburn. She wears her dark brown hair pulled back tightly in a ponytail. She has strong eyebrows and bright, expressive eyes. It is only her scar-streaked hands that stamp her as a cook.

She is the last person you would expect to be frying up pork burgers to represent her style of cooking.

"All chefs love pork," Ms. Goin said, as she put a mound of Niman Ranch ground pork into a ceramic bowl. "Into the ground pork, I put chorizo and chopped bacon, so it's pork three ways."

O.K., so it was not just a pork burger. And

know that that's what you're tasting."

Ms. Goin looks to her Mexican cooks for approval. "They appreciate good cooking, and when they really like something, they say so," she said. They love these burgers.

Ms. Goin began by pouring a thick pool of oil into a worn iron crepe pan and lashing it with heat. She sprinkled in a handful of

Cooking with a fancy chef who fears she's not fancy enough.

chopped shallots, finely sliced chiles de árbol and cumin, which she had toasted and then ground coarsely, to add a pebbly detail. As they began spitting and sweating, Ms. Goin turned the shallots, over and over, using a soup spoon as her tool. After a minute or two she seasoned the mixture with salt and dropped in a pinch of fresh thyme leaves, then turned off the heat.

Most home cooks add raw garlic, onion or



spoon. She sank her hands deep into the ground meat, lifting and folding, but gently.



PORK THREE WAYS Suzanne Goin, left, uses shallots, fresh thyme and parsley, above, in her pork burger, which also contains applewood smoked bacon and chorizo sausage.

that's good."

Her hands turned from mixing to making patties. "You don't want to overmix it," she said, "because it gets tough. You want it to be lightly packed." She made patties that were about three inches around and three-quarters of an inch high.

much, you can finish it in a 350-degree oven.) As it cooked, Ms. Goin stood over the stove, alternately pressing on the burger with her finger to feel it for doneness and using her handy soup spoon to baste the burger with the fat in the pan.

"When I was a kid, my dad would put a hunk of butter in the middle," she said. He