

Turkish Lamb Kebabs

This is a traditional Turkish kebab recipe “hacked” by my friend N. Cordova. He tested it on some real live Turks with whom he was working (in Turkey) and got a unanimous thumbs up. I made this recipe myself the other night and I second the judgement of his co-workers. Easy to make and delicious!

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

- 2 lbs ground lamb, cold
- ½ red onion, finely chopped
- 8 large cloves of garlic, minced
- 1½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp dried rosemary, roughly ground
- 1 tsp dried sage, roughly ground
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1-4 Tbs white flour
- Wooden meat skewers
- Charcoal and hardwood chips

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, mix the onion, garlic, and all spices. Put the lamb in a large bowl and slowly add the spice mixture, thoroughly mixing the lamb and spices after each addition.
2. Add flour slowly in 1 Tbs increments and continue mixing until the result is firm, but not sticky. In my case, the entire mixture became a firm ball after about 2 Tbs, but the amount you need to add will vary with the temperature and fat content of the lamb. Place the bowl in the fridge to chill until the grill is ready.
3. Prepare a charcoal fire medium-hot with nice glowing coals.
4. Mold the ¼ of the lamb mixture onto a pair of meat skewers separated by about ½ inch. Using a pair of skewers, though not exactly traditional, helps hold the meat together when you turn it on the grill. Form the meat in the shape of a long tube about 1¼ to 1½ inch in diameter. You can roll the meat with your hands on a cutting board to achieve a nice even cylinder.
5. Repeat with the remaining lamb mixture and skewers.
6. Grill the skewers over direct heat turning every couple of minutes until all sides are browned. Adding hardwood chips to the fire adds a nice smoky touch to the meat.
7. Serve with rice, couscous, and grilled vegetables. Add a Tzatziki sauce on the side, if you like that sort of thing.