

A Farmer's Delight

Pairs With: White Merlot

Burger Type: Beef

Bun Type: Brioche

INTRODUCTION:

A Farmer's Delight is more than a mouthwatering burger, it is a remembrance of my childhood. Having been raised in Washington, D.C., I could not wait to spend my summer vacations at my aunt and uncle's farm in Mt. Airy, Maryland. Farming is hard work but the rewards tickle our taste buds to a degree of utter delight. That being said, allow me to share my entry for review. I will start from the base of the burger and work my way up. A Farmer's Delight is a half-pound burger that is nestled in between a brioche bun. The patty is seasoned with smoked-salt butter. The butter enhances the sear while the smoked salt enriches the charcoal flavor. A little trivia follows - did you know that pimento cheese was developed by a farmer in New York in the 1870s? With that thought in mind, a pimento cheese ball is hidden in the patty for a gooey surprise. This cheesy goodness not only gives the burger depth of flavor but also contrast in texture. The next component is a red fried tomato that is breaded with cornflakes, corn chips, and cornmeal. Red tomatoes have more flavor than green tomatoes, and the "corn" breading continues the theme of farm-to-table. A dollop of sweet and spicy peach-tomato jam follows. Fragrant peaches and meaty Roma tomatoes gives this burger a "wow" factor and pairs beautifully with the pimento cheese ball and fried tomato. Precision is not quite ascertained: acidity and freshness are necessary for completion. A cucumber, onion salad where the veggies are sliced on a mandoline ensures lightness and brightness. This classic salad is the final component of my entry. A farmer's Delight is a delicious burger that was created to say thank you to all the farmers who have dedicated their lives to feeding America.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3-pounds yellow peaches, seeded and skins removed, coarsely chopped
- 1-pound Roma tomatoes, seeded, ends removed, and coarsely chopped
- 1 large yellow onion, coarsely chopped

- 3 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 tablespoons ground ginger
- 1 1/4 teaspoons ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3/4 teaspoon red papper flakes
- 4 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/3 cup pimento cheese spread
- 1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 stick unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked salt
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 English cucumber
- 1 sweet onion
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped Italian parsley
- 1 cup rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 1/2 tablespoons mustard seeds
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 6 large slices of red tomatoes
- 3 large eggs
- 3 teaspoons water
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 cup crushed cornflakes
- 1 cup crushed corn flakes
- 2 cups unseasoned panko bread crumbs
- 3 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons black pepper

- 10 cups canola oil
- 3 pounds (80/20) ground beef
- 6 large brioche buns

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. To Make the Sweet and Spicy Peach, Tomato Jam - Combine tomatoes, onions, garlic, sugar, ginger, cloves, cumin, salt, red pepper flakes, and rice vinegar in a heavy bottom pan. Bring mixture to a boil, reduce heat to medium and cook for 20 minutes. Add peaches and continue to cook until mixture reduces and thickens to the consistency of a jam, approximately 25 minutes. Remove jam from hot pan and place on a sheet pan to cool down
2. To Make the Pimento Cheese Ball - In a medium bowl, combine shredded cheese, pimento cheese spread, and garlic powder and mix until fully incorporated
3. To Make the Smoked Salt Butter - In a small bowl, combine the soft butter, smoked salt, and kosher salt until well blended
4. To Make the Cucumber, Onion Salad - Slice cucumber and onions on a mandoline. Combine rice vinegar, water, mustard seeds, sugar, and salt in a medium bowl. Add cucumbers, onion, and parsley. Toss well
5. To Make the Red Fried Tomatoes - Combine eggs and water in a small bowl, mix well. Using the back of a small saucepan, crush the cornflakes, set aside. Repeat this process for the corn chips. Then combine cornmeal, corn chips, cornflakes, and panko in a pie plate
6. Heat oil in a cast iron skillet over medium-high heat until oil reaches 350 degrees. Dip a slice of tomato in the egg wash, and then into the cornmeal mixture. Fry until the bottom edges are golden brown, approximately 3 minutes. Then flip and cook the other side until golden brown, approximately 2 1/2 minutes
7. Place fried tomatoes on a cooling rack and season with salt and pepper. Repeat this process for the remaining sliced tomatoes
8. To Make the Ground Beef Patties - Divide ground beef into 6 equal patties. Make a well into the ground beef and add 1 rounded tablespoon of pimento cheese spread in the center. Form the ground beef to enclose the cheese ball. Spread 1 teaspoon of smoked

salt butter on each side of the patty. Turn the grill to medium-high. Grill the burgers for 5 minutes, then flip them and grill for another 4 minutes

9. To Make the Hamburger Buns - Place each bun, cut side down on the grill and toast for 1 minute

Cooking tip: Place fried tomatoes on a cooling rack as opposed to resting them on a plate lined with paper towels. This way, they remain crisp vs. sitting in their grease.