



Black Bean Burgers

From *America's Test Kitchen* Season 16: Vegetarian Essentials

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

For great-tasting, cohesive burgers, we start by grinding tortilla chips in the food processor. We then pulse the beans with the chips so the beans maintain some texture. Eggs, and flour, which contains sticky amylopectin, help to hold the burger mix together. To keep the preparation simple, we add no-cook seasonings that bolster the Latin American flavor of the burgers. Letting the mixture sit in the refrigerator for an hour gives the starches time to soak up moisture from the egg, so the patties are easier to shape.

Serves 4

The black bean mixture needs to be refrigerated for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours prior to cooking. When forming the patties, it is important to pack them firmly together. Our favorite canned black beans are Bush's Best. Serve the burgers with your favorite toppings or with one of our spreads (see related content).

INGREDIENTS

- 2** (15-ounce) cans black beans, rinsed
- 2** large eggs
- 2** tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 4** scallions, minced
- 3** tablespoons minced fresh cilantro
- 2** garlic cloves, minced
- 1** teaspoon ground cumin
- 1** teaspoon hot sauce (optional)
- 1/2** teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/4** teaspoon pepper
- 1** ounce tortilla chips, crushed coarse (1/2 cup)
- 8** teaspoons vegetable oil
- 6** hamburger buns

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Line rimmed baking sheet with triple layer of paper towels and spread beans over towels. Let stand for 15 minutes.
- 2.** Whisk eggs and flour together in large bowl until uniform paste forms. Stir in scallions; cilantro; garlic; cumin; hot sauce, if using; coriander; salt; and pepper until well combined.
- 3.** Process tortilla chips in food processor until finely ground, about 30 seconds. Add black beans and pulse until beans are roughly broken down, about 5 pulses. Transfer black bean mixture to bowl with egg mixture and mix until well combined. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours.

4. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees. Divide bean mixture into 6 equal portions. Firmly pack each portion into tight ball, then flatten to 3 1/2-inch-diameter patty. (Patties can be wrapped individually in plastic wrap, placed in a zipper-lock bag, and frozen for up to 2 weeks. Thaw patties before cooking.)

5. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Carefully place 3 patties in skillet and cook until bottoms are well browned and crisp, about 5 minutes. Flip patties, add 2 teaspoons oil, and cook second side until well browned and crisp, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer burgers to wire rack set in rimmed baking sheet and place in oven to keep warm. Repeat with remaining 3 patties and 4 teaspoons oil. Transfer burgers to buns and serve.

TECHNIQUE

BEAN BURGERS GONE BAD

Mixing lots of starchy binders with whole or coarsely chopped beans makes a dry, crumbly burger without much flavor. Pureeing the beans allows you to use minimal binders but turns the patty mushy and gluey.

CRUMBLY AND TASTELESS

Lots of starchy binders mute the bean flavor and dry out the burger.



WET AND MUSHY

Pureed beans need fewer binders but lead to burgers with a hummus-like texture.



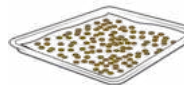
TECHNIQUE

KEYS TO AN IDEAL BLACK BEAN BURGER

Here's what we did to create a burger full of earthy bean flavor that wasn't muted by too much starchy binder.

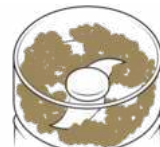
DRY BEANS

Removing excess moisture by draining on paper towels helps cut down on the need for absorbent binders.



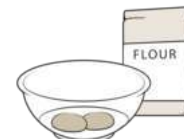
PULSE, DON'T PUREE

Pulsing the beans with tortilla chips (we processed them first) keeps the beans chunky for textural contrast.



GIVE IT EXTRA CLING

In addition to eggs and starchy tortilla chips, we add flour, which contains sticky amylopectin, to hold the mix together.



LET IT REST

Letting the mixture sit gives the starches time to soak up the eggs



so the burgers are easier to handle.
