

Shawarma

Shawarma is a Levantine Arab dish consisting of meat cut into thin slices, stacked in a cone-like shape, and roasted on a slowly-turning vertical rotisserie or spit. Originally made of lamb or mutton, today's shawarma may also be chicken, turkey, beef, or veal. Thin slices are shaved off the cooked surface as it continuously rotates. Shawarma is one of the world's most popular street foods, especially in Egypt, the countries of the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula, and beyond. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, accessed March 24, 2021.

While shawarma refers to the vertical rotisserie of meat, many people also associate it with the spice mix used to season the meat. This month you received a spice mix made of sumac, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder and cayenne. We've included three recipes that use this spice mix from books in the Shelby Township Library. We've also sprinkled this spice mix on stir-fried vegetables, roasted cauliflower and squash, and in creamy soups.

Main ingredients

Meat: lamb, chicken, turkey, beef

Sandwich: Shawarma meat, pita or wrap bread, chopped or shredded vegetables, pickles and assorted condiments.

To make more of the shawarma spice blend? Here is the recipe we used:

- 1/2 cup ground sumac
- 1/4 cup smoked paprika
- 2 Tbs garlic powder
- 2 Tbs onion powder
- 1 Tbs cayenne

Mix all ingredients well and store in a covered jar.



Shawarma



The spice blend you received includes:

- sumac
- paprika
- garlic powder
- onion powder
- cayenne

GOLDIE FRENCH FRIES



Ingredients

2 quarts cold water
2/3 cup apple cider vinegar
½ cup plus 1 Tbs kosher salt, divided
4 pounds russet or Yukon Gold potatoes
1 teaspoon shawarma spice blend
Canola oil for frying

Adapted from “Healthy Indian Cooking” by Shehzad Husain, 641.595H

Directions

1. Put the lamb in a large bowl and add the marinade ingredients. Let marinate in the refrigerator 2-4 hours.
2. To make the tahini sauce, put the tahini in a bowl. Alternate whisking the lemon juice and 6 tablespoons of water into the tahini. This is to make sure you get the right balance of tartness and creaminess, like yogurt. Add garlic and salt to taste.
3. Cooking time: Heat a large sauté-pan on medium-high. When the pan is very hot add the meat and sauté for a few minutes, until the meat is done to your liking.
4. To make the sandwiches layer the meat, onion, tomatoes, and gherkin slices in the pita bread and drizzle with the tahini sauce, and fold into the bread.



LAMB SHAWARMA SANDWICH



Adapted from "Feast: Food of the Islamic World" by Anissa Helou.
641.5956H

Ingredients

Seasoning

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds boneless lamb
shoulder, thinly sliced
2 medium onions, thinly
sliced
juice of 1 lemon
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground allspice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground
cinnamon
1 teaspoon shwarma mix

Tahini Sauce

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup tahini
juice of 1 lemon
2 cloves garlic, minced
sea salt

Sandwiches

pita breads
4 small tomatoes, thinly
sliced
1 small red onion cut thin
4 gherkins, sliced
lengthwise

Directions

1. Make a brine in a large bowl with the water, vinegar, and the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salt. Whisk until the salt is dissolved.
2. Wash and cut the potatoes into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch strips. Soak the potatoes in the brine for 1 hour at room temperature.
3. Bring an inch of water to a boil in a large pot and set a colander or steamer basket inside the pot, making sure the bottom sits above the water. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the potatoes to the steamer and steam for about 20 minutes until the potatoes are just barely tender. Turn off the heat.
4. Gently remove the potatoes from the steamer basket and shake off any excess moisture. Then lay them in a single layer on a baking sheet and freeze uncovered for at least 12 hours.
5. To fry the potatoes heat 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches of oil to 350 degrees in a large pot. Using a slotted spoon carefully lower the potatoes into the oil and turn the heat to high. Fry the potatoes for 6 to 8 minutes until they are golden brown and crispy. Then lay them on a paper towel-lined plate to collect excess oil. Transfer them to a large bowl, sprinkle them with the shawarma spice blend and tablespoon of salt.
6. Air Fryer Alternative: If you have an air-fryer, place a single layer of fries in the baskets. You may have to do batches. Spritz with cooking spray. Cook for 4 minutes at 400 degrees and then flip them to the other side for 4 minutes. When cooked, add the spice and remaining salt.

CHICKEN THIGH SHAWARMA



Adapted from "Israeli Soul" by Michael Solomonov and Steven Cook, 641.5956S

Ingredients

Seasoning

1 ½ Tbs shawarma spice blend
1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt
2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs
3 Tbs canola oil

Wrap

pita bread
tahini sauce (see lamb shawarma recipe)
3 cups chopped lettuce
4 small tomatoes, thinly sliced
1 cucumber, sliced
fresh parsley
4 gherkins, sliced

Directions

1. Mix the spice blend with the salt in a small bowl. Rub the mixture onto the chicken thighs. Wrap each seasoned piece of chicken tightly in plastic wrap, securing the wrap. Refrigerate for 2-24 hours.
2. Bring a medium pot of water to a simmer. Carefully lower the wrapped chicken into the hot water and poach for 15 minutes. Transfer to an ice bath, drain and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.
3. When you're ready to serve the shawarma, unwrap the chicken and slice each piece thinly.
4. Heat the oil in a cast-iron skillet, over medium-high heat. Cook the sliced chicken, turning carefully for about 3 minutes. Let the pieces char slightly.
5. Then, layer the chicken on the bread with the vegetables and tahini sauce.