Japanese Burgers with Caramelized Onion Curry Gravy (Hanbagu)

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An Asian-influenced beef burger with loads of flavor from the caramelized onion gravy.

1 tablespoon olive oil

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided into 4 tablespoons

2 1/2 cups yellow onions, small dice

1/4 cup whole milk

1/2 cup bread crumbs, gluten-free or otherwise

1 pound ground chuck

1 pound ground sirloin

1 teaspoon kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

2 eggs

2 tablespoons flour, or 3 tablespoons brown rice flour

1 tablespoon Madras curry powder

1 1/2 cup water (1 1/2 to 2)

2 tablespoons ketchup

2 tablespoons sake

1 teaspoon sugar, dissolved in the sake

2 tablespoons tamari soy sauce (2 to 3)

Parsley for garnish

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons
http://tastingspoons.com

Servings: 6

1. In a large sauté pan, heat the oil with 1 tablespoon of butter. When the butter has melted, add the onions and caramelize them slowly over medium heat. This takes a LONG time. Be patient and stir often.
2. While the onions are gently sizzling away combine the milk and bread crumbs in a large mixing bowl. All your ground meat will go into this bowl, so make sure it is large. Let the bread crumbs absorb the milk.
3. Add the ground meats to the bowl along with a teaspoon of salt, black pepper to taste, and the eggs. Mix it well, making sure to really work everything together so you get a nice blend.You don't want any streaks of the bread crumb/milk mixture, or egg white.
4. Once the onions are French onion soup brown, remove them from the pan to a plate. You can re-use the pan - remove any burned bits. Let the onions cool a minute, then add 3/4 of the onions to the steak mix and knead them in. Form six 6-ounce patties. If time permits, place the burgers on a waxed paper lined sheet and refrigerate for 1 hour (makes them easier to handle).
4. Place the pan back onto the heat and turn it to medium high. Add the remaining butter and let it melt and bubble, but not burn. If it begins to burn, turn the heat down. Once the bubbles begin to subside, add the burgers (if your sauté pan isn't big enough, do this in batches.) Brown them on both sides, cook them to about 130°F (use an instant read thermometer with the probe into the center of each burger) or to your desired temperature and then gently remove them to a warmed plate and keep them in a low oven while you make the pan gravy.
5. If your butter is burned, clean pan and start over. There should be a bit of butter left in the pan (if not, add just a little bit). Add the remaining onions and the flour and let them cook for a minute or two while you are stirring it around. Add the curry powder, stir once or twice to break out the spice flavors, and then add the water, ketchup, sake, and tamari, stirring the entire time until the sauce comes to a boil and thickens. Make sure to use your wooden spoon to scrape up all the goodies from the bottom of the pan. Taste and adjust the seasoning (don't add salt). If it is too thick, add water a 1/4 cup at a time, stirring between additions. Taste and adjust the seasonings if needed.
6. Place the burgers on individual plates and pour the sauce over the top. If desired, serve with steamed white rice and vegetables (traditionally broccoli, potatoes, and sliced tomatoes).

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 581 Calories; 41g Fat (64.6% calories from fat); 33g Protein; 18g Carbohydrate; 2g Dietary Fiber; 202mg Cholesterol; 921mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1/2 Grain(Starch); 4 1/2 Lean Meat; 1 Vegetable; 0 Non-Fat Milk; 5 1/2 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.