

To Make Mutton Sausages

This recipe will make approximately 10 sausages, depending on how big you make them! You will not need a sausage grinder or any casings, but you will need a pestle and mortar and some decent sized bowls.

900g mutton (or lamb) leg meat - specifically not the shank

190g beef suet - 'the best', ideally fresh as the packet stuff has flour which isn't part of the recipe

Approximately 1g of herbs - 50% thyme, 35% sage, 25% winter savoury **OR** 60% thyme, 30% sage, 10% mint. We used dried herbs but presumably this would work with fresh – just use more herbs, perhaps 3 times the quantity?

1/5th of a nutmeg

8-10 cloves

30 peppercorns (1 tsp)

2 pinches of mace

1/5th of an egg yolk - (!) We ended up using the whole egg yolk, as 1/5th didn't seem enough to bind the whole mix, but perhaps they had bigger eggs in those days...

1. Remove any skin from the meat (this would be very difficult to grind) and chop the meat into small chunks, approx. 1-2cm big.
2. Chop the suet into small pieces, approximately the size of a hemp seed (or peppercorn). If you cut the suet too small, it will melt away in the cooking. If uncertain, go bigger! We found this worked even up to the size of a cardamom pod.
3. A handful at a time, add the chopped meat to the pestle and mortar with a small pinch of the suet. The idea is not to use very much suet at this stage – it seems mainly to help lubricate the pestle and mortar!
4. Mash, smash, grind and beat the meat until it is a paste-like consistency and you cannot distinguish the individual chunks. Transfer this to another dish as you are working.
5. Mix some of the herbs into the bowl of chopped suet, and then fling the rest into the ground meat and mix it in with your hands. (You could probably just mix everything together in one go, to be fair, but the recipe specifies mixing them separately.)
6. Grind the cloves and peppercorns in the pestle and mortar. Grate in the nutmeg and add the mace.
7. Put the spices, chopped suet and ground meat (with herbs added), and the egg yolk into a large mixing dish.
8. Now's your chance to get your hands dirty, if they weren't already! Smush the whole mixture together, making sure the spices and suet are spread evenly throughout.
9. Grab a hunk of the mixture and mould it into a sausage shape. Really work it with your hands, it seems to help soften and bind together. The recipe says that these can be 'rolled' into sausages, but we found they just fell apart. Perhaps using some baking paper or clever implements, you might have more luck.
10. Fry the sausages in a little oil (or, if you're adventurous, boil them in water) until cooked through. Serve with gravy – delicious!

Original recipe – Mary Wise’s Cookbook, page 55 (Warwickshire County Record Office, reference CR341/300)

To make Mutton Sausages

If a Leg of Mutton Weighs 10 or 11 pound You must allow 2 pound of ye best Beef Suet, but cut away all ye Shiny part of ye Meat, then Chop ye Mutton a Little, & beat it in a mortar with Some of the best Suet till it be like past put to it a good Quantity of Thyme, a little Sage & Winter Savory, then take it out of ye Mortar & Chop ye rest of ye Suet & Herbs together, till they look about ye bigness of Hempseed, for if it be too Small in frying or boyling ye fat will al Melt away they must not be done So much as Pork but eaten with the Gravey, an oz of Pepper beaten Small, 1[?] worth of Cloves as much of mace a nutmeg & ye Yolk of an Egg, this is to make ‘em bind that You may Rowl ‘em like Sausages