

Alex's Basterma Recipe

Ingredients:

- 5 lb. Very lean beef: sirloin, top or eye of the round
- Wooden box with a layer of fine salt
- Chemen Flavouring Paste
- Tender Quick™ (or 5 grams of Sodium Nitrite)
- See note below in red.

Cure the Meat:

1. Place a layer of salt in a wooden box.
2. Trim the meat of all visible fat, sinew and tendon. Cut meat into 3-inch thick slabs.
3. Before putting the meat in the salt stab it all over with a Gardeners fork.
4. Now add a layer of meat to the surface of the salt making sure that the meats are not touching each other; the meat must be able to drain freely.
5. Prepare the curing mixture by adding 5 grams sodium nitrite (NaNO₂) to one kilo of salt. [Note: do not use saltpeter, which is potassium nitrate KNO₃) ... Len's note: You can use Tender Quick™ according to package directions for dry-cure].
6. Pack the meat solidly with the salt mixture (or Tender Quick™) leave this for 48 hours, then wash well with running water.
7. Stand rinsed meat in water for 6 hours, covering the meat well, and changing the water every 2 hours [or 3 to 4 times].
8. Now squeeze out the water out of the meat and wrap it well in a clean cotton cloth.
9. Place a brick or similar heavy object on top of the bundle and keep changing the cloth until there is little or no seepage.
10. Pock a hole in one end of the meat chunks thread with a string and hang to dry near an open window, until the outside feels quite dry.



Make the Chemen Flavouring Paste according to Alex's special recipe:



½ cup	Chemen (in English, fenugreek)	115.0 g
¼ cup	Paprika	56.0 g
½-head	Garlic	30.0 g
1+ Tbs.	Cumin	8.0 g
	Cayenne pepper (optional)	To taste
	Salt (optional)*	To taste

* Taste a small sliver of the meat for saltiness. Usually there is enough salt in the meat, but you can add more if you choose.

Method: Mix all ingredients together with a little water in a blender or food processor. The paste must be thick and tacky. Using a knife or your hands thoroughly, coat the meat; you may want to dip your hands into fresh water to prevent the paste from sticking to your hands. Hang again to dry then seal in plastic bag and leave up to 3 weeks for the seasoning to penetrate, it is then ready to eat

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