

Meat Basics

Everything you need to know about buying and cooking meat

We here at Scotch Mountain Meats produce and sell 3 different types of Meats. They are **Beef**, **Lamb** and **Pork**. In order to get a better understanding of the various types, cuts and general cooking guidelines we are doing a monthly segment on any one of our meats, randomly selected.

This month segment will be about **Lamb**.
We hope you enjoy this very useful information!

Lamb

Lamb is an excellent source of protein, iron and B vitamins, thiamine, riboflavin and niacin. Lamb is light to dark pink in color and has a firm, fine-grained texture. Lamb is very lean (a leg of roast contains less than 185 calories per 90g serving) and because lamb is a non-marbled meat, it makes the fat easy to trim for the fat-conscious consumer.

Fresh lamb can be stored in the coolest part of your refrigerator for up to 3 days when covered loosely with wax paper. For longer storage, wrap lamb airtight and freeze. Lamb keeps well in the freezer – up to 8 month for roasts, 5 month for chops and 3 month for ground lamb and organ meats.

Cooked lamb should be wrapped or covered and stored in the refrigerator within one hour after cooking and can be stored for up to 4 or 5 days.

Lamb is known for its versatility and delicate flavour. While it's very good served on its own – it also allows you to use a variety of seasonings and flavours. Spices such a garlic, rosemary, marjoram, basil, mint, thyme, ginger and oregano create flavour sensations. They can be sprinkled on meat before cooking or added to gravies and sauces. Flavourings such as lemon pepper, onion and curry are popular with lamb creations. You may want to consider making slits in tops of roasts before baking and insert slivers of garlic, mint leaves or sprigs of parsley.

Lamb can be served with traditional mint sauces but consider the possibility of red pepper jelly, sweet and sour, teriyaki and barbeque sauces, maple syrup, cranberry sauce, grape or currant jelly with your lamb dishes.

Consider garnishing with broiled peach or pear halves, pineapple, tomatoes or mushrooms. There is no limit to your imagination!

Lamb is one of the best meats to cook from a frozen state because it does not get tough or dry. While cooking times vary for lamb, it should be roasted at 325° F. Internal temperature of lamb roasts should reach 150° F for medium and 170° F for well done. It is important not to overcook lamb – fresh lamb is tender, juicy and delicious when slightly pink in the middle.



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Serve lamb piping hot on warmed plates to best enhance lamb's delicate flavour. When using lamb in salads or serving cold, let it stand at room temperature for 2 – 4 hours, slice and serve.

Best of all, lamb can be served with white or red wines!

Cooking Temperature and Time Tables

Roasting

Roasting should be done in a 325° F oven. No need to preheat first.

Cut	Approximate Weight	Temperature (Thermometer should read)	Approximate Cooking Time
	Lbs	Degrees F	Min. per Lb
Leg	7 - 9	140° F (rare)	15 - 20
		160° F (medium)	20 - 25
		170° F (well)	25 - 30
Leg	5 - 7	140° F (rare)	20 - 25
		160° F (medium)	25 - 30
		170° F (well)	30 - 35
Leg, Boneless	4 - 7	140° F (rare)	25 - 30
		160° F (medium)	30 - 35
		170° F (well)	35 - 40
Leg, Shank Half	3 - 4	140° F (rare)	30 - 35
		160° F (medium)	40 - 45
		170° F (well)	45 - 50
Leg, Sirloin Half	3 - 4	140° F (rare)	25 - 30
		160° F (medium)	35 - 40
		170° F (well)	45 - 50
Shoulder, Boneless	3.5 - 5	140° F (rare)	30 - 35
		160° F (medium)	35 - 40
		170° F (well)	40 - 45

Broiling at moderate temperature

Cut	Approximate Thickness	Approximate Weight	Distance from Heat	Approximate Cooking Time
	Inches	Ounces	Inches	Minutes
Shoulder Chops	¾ - 1	5 - 9	3 - 4	7 - 11
Rib Chops	1	3 - 5	3 - 4	7 - 11
	1 ½	4.5 - 7.5	4 - 5	15 - 19
Loin Chops	1	3 - 5	3 - 4	7 - 11
	1 ½	4.5 - 7.5	4 - 5	15 - 19

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Sirloin Chops	¾ - 1	6 - 10	3 - 4	12 - 15
Leg Steaks	¾ - 1	11 - 18	3 - 4	14 - 18
Cubes for Kabobs	1 - 1 ½		4 - 5	8 - 12
Ground patties	½ x 4	4	3	5 - 8

Braising

To braise means to cook food very slowly in liquid in a covered container. The secret is to go slowly! You can braise on top of the stove or in a slow, 250° F oven. Its all-over heat gives a deeper, richer flavour and even cooking. Don't drown the food in liquid but use enough to cook in a moist environment. The best cuts of meat for braising are lean, tough cuts such as shanks. Keep in mind that there is very little moisture in the meat. Don't think about 'cooking' as much as 'encouraging' the meat to tenderness. The cooking liquid can be water, wine, stock or a combination.

Check for doneness with a pair of tongs. When the meat is done, it will pull away from the bone with no resistance. Let the braised meat cool in the braising liquid. As meat cooks, it relaxes and releases its juices. If it remains in the braising liquid as it cools, the juices will stay in the meat.

Cut	Average Weight or Thickness	Approximate Cooking Time
Neck Slices	¾ inch	1 hour
Shoulder Chops	¾ to 1 inch	45 - 60 minutes
Breast – stuffed	3 pounds	1 ½ - 2 hours
Breast – rolled	1 ½ - 2 pounds	1 ½ - 2 hours
Riblets	¾ - 1 pound each	1 ½ - 2 hours
Shanks	¾ - 1 pound each	1 - 1 ½ hours
Stew Meat	1 ½ inch pieces	1 ½ - 2 hours

Homemade Lamb Burgers

Ingredients:

- ~ 1 ½ lbs Ground 'Scotch Mountain' Lamb
- ~ 1 to 2 Shallots depending on taste - finely chopped
- ~ 1 bottle Crosse & Blackwell Mint Sauce or equivalent vinegar based mint sauce
- ~ 1/3 cup Bread Crumbs

Preparation:

- ~ Strain 1 tbsp of mint sauce leaves from mint sauce vinegar with a sieve
- ~ Set aside 3 tbsp of mint sauce vinegar and return remainder to bottle



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In a bowl add ground lamb, shallots, mint leaves and mint sauce vinegar. Fold and mix briefly. Add Breadcrumbs to absorb excess vinegar. Gently fold and mix together thoroughly. Form into 4 hamburger patties – remember that ground lamb will shrink considerably when cooking so adjust patty size to compensate.

BBQ Lamb burgers on high heat, 2 minutes per side, then reduce heat to medium and cook until desired. (Watch for flare ups).

Serve with blue cheese and arugula or caramelized onions.

Enjoy!