

# ARTS & VARIETY

## Russian Kotleti

BY DYLAN HOLTMEIER

**K**OTLETI IS PROBABLY RUSSIAN for delicious meatball/sausage patty thing. The ingredients are fairly common, but somehow it all comes together to taste distinctly Russian. These are pretty simple to make, and if you like playing around with meat, this is a great recipe for you. But, if handling raw, ground meat gives you the heebie jeebies, stay far away from this recipe.

1 lb of ground meat (beef, chicken, pork etc.)  
 ½ Medium onion, diced (white or yellow)  
 1 Slice of bread  
 1 Egg  
 1 Tablespoon salt  
 1 Tablespoon pepper  
 1 Tablespoon dried herbs (Any you want—Tarragon is very good in my opinion)  
 Flour  
 Oil

Add the ground meat, diced onion, egg, salt, pepper, and herbs to a large bowl. Wet the slice of bread in water (you're not looking for soaking wet, something in between damp and wet) and tear into small pieces, then add to the bowl.

Combine all the ingredients and mix well, so the mixture is homogeneous throughout. Add a 1 cm layer of flour to a dinner plate. This will be used for rolling the Kotleti. Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. You want enough oil to just cover the bottom of the skillet.

Using two tablespoons or your hands, form slightly oblong balls of the mixture and roll in the flour, coating every side. Add Kotleti to the hot oil, flipping every few minutes or until each side is golden brown.

Kotleti are cooked all the way through when they feel firm to the touch. Anything before this, they will be pink in the middle. Good side dishes include buttered mas-

hed potatoes, buttered wild rice, buttered peas, anything with butter.

I found this recipe on YouTube again. It's this cute little Russian family that makes videos about random Russian life topics, and one of their videos had recipes for what they were making for supper. They talked it up in the video, so I knew I had to try it. I feel like it's the closest thing to getting an authentic recipe directly from another person, which adds an extra quality to the whole experience.

There are a few things to keep in mind when making this. First, you have to be careful how much diced onion

you add. The first time I made this, I added way too much and it was difficult keeping the kotleti together. Along these lines, the smaller the pieces of onion you chop, the better. When the pieces are smaller, they seem to mix more evenly. Second, I recommend taking the crust off of the bread you use, and only soaking the white part. The crust holds together more and therefore doesn't mix well into the meat and onion mixture. Lastly, frying the kotleti in half oil and half butter makes it taste even better, but you have to be careful with not letting the butter burn, so the cooking time might be slightly longer. If you give this recipe a try, I hope you enjoy it.



Kotleti. Photo Credit: Dylan Holtmeier