DIRECT · ADVANCED

Lamb Lyulya Kebab on the Kamado

The question is never how to season it, but why it falls off the skewer. The answer is fat, a hand-chopped grain and real kneading: juicy lamb that holds together over direct fire.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
40 min	15 min	6	240 °C

Ingredients

- **1 kg** boneless lamb shoulder
- **250 g** white onion
- **20 g** chopped fresh coriander
- **1 cdita** ground cumin (zira)
- **0.5 cdita** dried chilli flakes
- **1 cdita** sumac
- **6 ud** pita breads or lavash
- **250 g** lamb fat (tail or kidney fat)
- **20 g** chopped fresh parsley
- **18 g** fine salt
- **1 cdita** freshly ground black pepper
- **2 ud** red onions
- **1 cda** lemon juice

Method

1 CHOOSE MEAT AND FAT

Ask your butcher for lamb shoulder with its fat and, separately, tail or kidney fat: you are aiming for 20-25 % fat on the total weight. Cut meat and fat into two-centimetre dice and spread them on a tray in the freezer for thirty minutes. Firm and very cold they chop cleanly; at room temperature they smear and the mixture loses its texture.

2 CHOP BY HAND

On a wide board, chop the meat with the Wüsthof Classic Cleaver 19 cm, gathering the mass back to the centre every few strokes. Aim for an uneven three- to four-millimetre grain, never a paste. Chop the fat separately and slightly finer, then fold it in: that way it distributes without melting from the heat of your hands. Allow twenty unhurried minutes.

3 ONION WITHOUT WATER

Chop the white onion into a tiny brunoise or grate it, salt it with a teaspoon and leave it for ten minutes. Then wrap it in a clean cloth and wring it out hard until not a drop falls. That juice is the main reason lyulya splits open over the coals. Chop the parsley and coriander too, discarding any thick stalks.

4 KNEAD AND CHILL

Combine meat, fat, wrung-out onion, herbs, salt, cumin, pepper and chilli flakes. Knead for ten minutes, then lift the mass and slap it back into the bowl twenty or thirty times. It is ready when it stops sticking to your palms and holds as one compact ball. Cover and chill for an hour: without that cold the fat runs out on the skewer.

5 LIGHT THE KAMADO

Fill the Onlyfire charcoal basket halfway, light it in two spots and open the top vent. Settle the kamado at 240 °C for direct cooking and wait until the white smoke has gone: you want live embers, not flame. Set the rests from the AWCIGG skewer set on the grate and keep the Grill Heat Aid gloves within reach.

6 SHAPE ON THE SKEWER

Dip your hands in very cold water and take about 120 grams of the mixture. Press the cylinder around a flat skewer from top to bottom, leaving no air pockets, until it is roughly eighteen centimetres long and three thick. Seal both ends firmly with your fingers and return each skewer to the fridge while you shape all twelve.

7 SEAR WITHOUT TOUCHING

Rest four or five skewers on the supports with the meat suspended over the coals and close the lid. Work in two or three batches so the grate is never crowded. Three minutes without touching them: that is how long the surface needs to set and build the crust that holds the cylinder. Turn them earlier and the mixture tears where it clings to the metal.

8 TURN AND FINISH

From then on give a quarter turn every two or three minutes, up to 12-15 minutes in total. The surface should be deep golden and slightly cracked, never black. Slide the thermometer in from one end, parallel to the skewer, and pull at 70-72 °C in the centre. Rest for two minutes lying on a piece of pita.

9 SUMAC ONION AND SERVE

Slice the red onion into very fine petals, rinse them for thirty seconds under cold water to knock back the bite, and pat dry. Dress with sumac, lemon juice and a pinch of salt. Slide the lyulya off the skewer by pulling it through the pita, and serve hot with the onion on top. Eat it wrapped, with your hands.

Editor's tips

- Before shaping all twelve skewers, fry a small ball of the mixture in a pan and taste it: it is the only way to correct salt and cumin in time.
- Use flat, wide skewers: on round ones the cylinder spins on itself every time you turn it and ends up in the coals.
- If you cannot find lamb tail fat, ask for kidney fat or a very fatty shoulder, but do not compensate with lean meat plus egg: egg toughens the mixture and still will not hold it.

- Always work with cold mixture. In summer on the Costa Blanca I put the bowl back in the fridge between batches: at thirty degrees on the terrace the fat softens within minutes.

Gear for this recipe

Big Green Egg Large

mikamado.es/en/kamados/big-green-egg-large

AWCIGG Skewer Set with Stands

The first three minutes decide whether the cylinder holds, and for that the meat must not touch the iron of the grate. The AWCIGG skewer and rest set covers both conditions of this recipe: wide flat skewers, on which the mixture does not spin on itself as you make quarter turns, and rests that keep the lyulya suspended over the 240 °C while the crust that holds it sets.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/awcigg-brochetas-soportes-set

Onlyfire stainless steel charcoal basket for kamado

Fifteen minutes of direct heat at 240 °C with the lid opening every two or three call for concentrated, live embers, not charcoal scattered across the bottom. The Onlyfire charcoal basket gathers the load right under the skewers, channels the airflow through the lower grate and lets ash drop away instead of smothering the fire. That way the second and third batches of lyulya cook as strongly as the first.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/onlyfire-cesta-carbon-kamado

DOQAUS instant-read thermometer, folding probe, 3-second read

Between 70 and 72 °C the lamb stays juicy; five degrees more and the fat you worked so hard to chop has gone into the coals. The DOQAUS folding thermometer reads in about three seconds, just enough time to probe from one end, parallel to the skewer, and close the lid again before the kamado loses temperature. It is what stops you guessing your way through a fifteen-minute cook.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/doqaus-termometro-instantaneo-plegable

Wüsthof Classic Cleaver 4685/19 — Butcher Knife 19 cm

Hand-chopping is what separates a juicy lyulya from a paste that splits open over the coals, and the blade decides it. The Wüsthof Classic Cleaver 19 cm cuts near-frozen shoulder instead of crushing it, and its weight does the work stroke after stroke through the twenty minutes a kilo of lamb takes. What you get is the uneven three- to four-millimetre grain that keeps the juice inside the cylinder.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/wusthof-classic-cleaver-19

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/lyulya-kebab-cordero-kamado

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