KitchenBooQ

Adana Kebab (Spicy Minced Lamb Skewers)

Serves: 4 | Cooking Time 45 minutes | Level: Capable



INGREDIENTS

2 lb (907 g) lamb shoulder, finely minced or hand-chopped
1/2 cup (113 g) lamb tail fat or beef suet, finely grated
2 tbsp (30 g) Aleppo pepper flakes
1 tsp (5 g) ground cumin
1 tsp (5 g) paprika
1/2 tsp (2.5 g) black pepper
1 tsp (6 g) salt
4 large egg whites, lightly beaten
8 metal skewers or soaked wooden skewers
4 pieces lavash or pita flatbread
2 large tomatoes, halved crosswise
1/2 cup (75 g) red onion, finely diced
1 tbsp (6 g) ground sumac
1 tsp (5 ml) olive oil

Notes
For authentic texture, insist on hand-minced lamb rather than food-processed meat, which releases too much moisture and causes the kebab to fall off the skewers. If lamb tail fat is unavailable, substitute with 20% fat ground lamb or add grated beef suet. Raw skewered kebabs must be refrigerated and cooked within 2 hours; store any leftovers in an airtight container strictly in the fridge for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months. Never leave raw or cooked meat at room temperature for extended periods due to food safety risks.

PREPARATION

1. Combine the minced lamb, grated fat, Aleppo pepper, cumin, paprika, black pepper, and salt in a large mixing bowl. Mix thoroughly with clean hands for about 3 to 4 minutes until the mixture turns dark red, becomes sticky, and starts to cling to your palms. This vigorous kneading is essential for proper adhesion on the skewers.

2. Gradually fold in the beaten egg whites while continuing to mix until fully incorporated. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate the meat mixture for at least 30 minutes to firm up the fat and make shaping easier.

3. Preheat a charcoal grill to medium-high heat or set an oven broiler to 500F (260C). If using wooden skewers, soak them in cold water for 20 minutes prior. Lightly brush the skewers with olive oil.

4. Wet your hands thoroughly with cold water to prevent sticking. Take a generous portion of the chilled lamb mixture and press it firmly onto each skewer, shaping it into an elongated, tapered cylinder about 8 inches long. Run your thumb along the sides to create signature grooves and ensure the meat grips the metal tightly.

5. Place the skewers directly on the grill grates or on a broiler pan positioned 4 inches from the heat source. Cook for 4 to 5 minutes per side until the exterior is deeply charred and the internal temperature reaches 160F (70C). During the final minute, lay the tomato halves cut-side down alongside the kebabs to soften and blister.

6. Transfer the skewers to a platter and let them rest for 2 minutes. Tear or fold the flatbreads into quarters, pile the hot kebabs on top, arrange the grilled tomatoes on the side, and scatter the diced red onion generously with sumac over everything. Serve immediately.