

## Lamb Kebabs (or Goat, Beef, or Pork for that matter)

First a little clarification on kebabs, traditional Kebabs are terrible and a perfect way to completely ruin very good meat! The problem with the typical Kebab cut is the cubes are too small and they can't be properly cooked. The goal is medium rare and nice and juicy inside but a nice crisp and dark outside and that is just not possible with 1+kebab cubes. Then to make matters even worse we run a hot metal poker through the center of that little nugget thereby conducting heat and cooking our little gems from the inside too. The results are always tough, chewy over done lumps of coal!

I offer you a solution, the Spiedies (pronounced SPEE-dees) which means roughly *little roasted things*. Rather than cutting our kebabs into the 1+cubes we have them cut into 2+squares so they won't fall through grates on your grill and they can be cooked properly. Spiedies were made famous in Binghamton NY. It is believed that they were first created by Augustine Iacovelli in 1929. He marinated and heavily seasoned lamb chunks on wooden skewers and served them on Italian bread. Today, spiedies are cubes of meat, typically lamb, but they can also be goat, beef, pork, or chicken cubes, or a mix of them. The meat is marinated for many hours, often overnight, usually in oil and vinegar with *lots* of garlic and green herbs. Some are skewered, and some are cooked on a perforated grill topper or cast iron griddle.

We prefer our spiedies not cooked on skewers, but grilled over an open flame with onions and peppers. When grilled, the olive oil drips and flares a lot so the meat gets really crunchy on the outside. Served rare to medium, the marinade flavor is almost as strong as the meat flavor.

### Lamb Spiedies (Makes 4 large sandwiches)

- 2 pounds of Hilltop Pastures Lamb Kebab meat
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup Italian dressing with lots of herbs (you can add more, especially oregano)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 4 cloves of crushed garlic
- 2 large onions, peeled and sliced in  $\frac{1}{2}$ +disks and separated into rings
- 2 bell peppers, any color, cored and cut into quarters
- 4 pieces of Italian bread about six inches long, and split lengthwise

### Do this:

- 1) Dump everything except the bread, onions, and peppers in a large zipper bag or a bowl and mix thoroughly, refrigerate at least overnight, but 24 hours or more is better.
- 2) Fire up the grill and toast the bread on the cut side with the lid open. Watch it carefully so it doesn't burn. If it does blacken a bit, scrape off the char and the bread will be fine. Set aside on a serving platter at room temp.
- 3) Grill the peppers on both sides until they are softening but not limp. Set aside in a serving bowl at room temp.
- 4) Put the onion rings into a bowl with about two ounces of the marinade and toss them together until the rings are well coated. Grill the rings with the lid open until they are slightly soft. I like them a bit crunchy, but if you don't, cook them longer. Set aside in a serving bowl at room temp.
- 5) Put a colander or strainer in the sink and dump the meat and marinade into it. Let the meat drain for a few minutes so it will not drip marinade onto the fire when you cook the meat. Then move the meat to the fire and separate the chunks so they are not touching. Grill on one side with the lid up until brown and until there are dark grill marks. We don't want the lid down because then the meat will be in an oven and it is too easy to overcook the meat. Turn the meat over with tongs and grill some more until the exterior brown a bit. That should do it. That should get you crispy exteriors and rare to medium rare interiors.
- 6) Assemble the sandwiches by putting the meat on the bread first and topping it with the pepper and onions.