



## **Morton's Hamburgers**

Years ago, before Arnie Morton and I really knew each other, we both worked at the Playboy club in Montreal. We were in the process of changing the menu, and I cooked a hamburger that I sent out for Arnie to try. A few minutes later he burst into the kitchen, demanding in no uncertain terms to know "Who cooked that hamburger?" As I stepped forward to claim the distinction, I wasn't sure if Arnie was pleased or not. He exclaimed that it was the best he'd ever tasted. From that day forward, we worked together and eventually opened Morton's Steakhouses. So I have always called this the "Million-Dollar Hamburger"!

**Wine Recommendation:** Red Zinfandel

### **Serves 6**

4 pounds coarse-grind ground sirloin  
4 large eggs  
¾ cup tomato juice  
1 tablespoon salt  
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
6 large hamburger buns  
3 tablespoons clarified butter  
Six ½ - inch thick slices tomato  
Six ¼- inch thick slices Spanish onion  
6 large leaves iceberg lettuce  
Ketchup or another topping, for serving (*see Note; optional*)

1. Preheat the broiler. Lightly oil and position the rack as close to the heat source as possible.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine the sirloin, eggs, tomato juice, salt and pepper. Use your hands or a wooden spoon to mix thoroughly. Divide the meat into six equal portions and gently form them into patties. Transfer to the broiler pan, and using a small sharp knife, make a crosshatch mark on the top of each burger about 1/8 inch deep. (This lets the juices percolate through the burger, and we also like the way it looks.)
3. Brush the inside of each bun with the butter. Toast the buns in the broiler for about 30 seconds on each side, or until lightly browned; be careful that the buns don't get too browned. Remove the buns and cover to keep warm. Reposition the broiler tray so that it is about 6 inches from the heat.

4. Broil the burgers for 3 to 3 ½ minutes on each side for rare, 4 minutes on each side for medium-rare and 4 ½ to 5 minutes on each side for medium.
5. To serve, put the bottom half of each bun on a plate. Top with a burger and then a tomato slice, onion slice and lettuce leaf. Add the top of the bun. Repeat to make five more burgers. Serve with ketchup, if desired.

*Note:* At the restaurant, we offer ketchup but also top the burgers with sautéed mushrooms, sautéed onions, and all sorts of cheese, as requested – Cheddar. Monterey Jack, Swiss and blue cheese are the most popular.