

All You Need to Know About Shashlik

Shashlik is a hugely popular picnic food across Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Russia. Alternatively known as shish kebab, it simply consists of marinated meat grilled over hot coals and has been part of Central Asian food culture for thousands of years, with variations of this dish being popular with the Romans! Although it's hugely popular in Russia nowadays, this food has only been a large part of Russian food culture since the late 19th century when it quickly became a local favorite in St. Petersburg and other large cities throughout the country. The simplicity of this dish has made it a modern favorite around the world, and if you haven't tried it before, we think it's about time you did!

What is Shashlik?

Shashlik is traditionally made using lamb or goat meat, but nowadays variations include pork, chicken, and beef. It's made by marinating cubes of meat in a yogurt or vinegar-based sauce that penetrates the meat due to its acidity, infusing the flavor and tenderizing the meat. The cubes are threaded on a skewer and then grilled over hot wood or coals until cooked through and slightly charred on the outside. Depending on the region, vegetables such as onion, bell pepper, tomato, or mushrooms are added to the skewer to create a variety of flavors. It's also usually served with either flatbreads or rice, again, depending on the region. The great thing about shashlik is that it's a sociable food, with large families and groups of friends gathering in local parks and outdoor areas for a shashlik grill in many Central Asian countries – much

like a cookout or grill here in the US!



How to make traditional Russian shashlik at home

Making shashlik at home is not difficult, but it does take some organization and preparation, so it's important to get everything sorted well ahead of time to allow for marinating and planning!

Ingredients:

1lb boneless lamb (or beef) – cut into 2 inch cubes (they will shrink when cooking), 1 onion – sliced, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine

vinegar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine (dry), 3 cloves garlic – chopped, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of ground cilantro, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon chili powder, $\frac{1}{2}$ bunch flat leaf parsley – chopped, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil.

How to make:

- In a large mixing bowl, mix together all of the ingredients. Then cover and allow to stand in the refrigerator for at least 24 hours (up to 48 hours)
- Pick out the meat chunks from the marinade, keeping the marinade for basting.
- Thread the meat evenly on four metal skewers – adding in vegetables if you'd like to make the kebabs go further and to add some variation.
- Get a charcoal grill going, ensuring that the coals turn white. Place the skewers across the grill, using a meat brush to add extra marinade for the first 5 minutes of cooking.
- If you don't have a grill (or it's storming or snowing outside), you can place the skewers in the oven at 425F for around 20 minutes – turning once after 10 minutes.
- Ensure the meat is cooked right through (about 15 minutes) and serve immediately.

Shashlik is proof that the simple dishes are truly the best, and there are few that are better than this one! If you're looking for something a little different this summer, why not bring some homemade shashlik to your family grill or picnic? It's simple, easy, and incredibly tasty. What's more, NetCost Market has a great selection of high-quality [ingredients](#) for making the best shashlik, so head down to your nearest NetCost Market to get everything you need to make this brilliantly

tasty dish!