

Photo: Camron Woods

MAINS {S}table

Salisbury steak from {S}table in Dunwoody

By Sarra Sedghi · Rough Draft Atlanta, 8/4/2026

Serves 4 people

Ingredients

STEAK

- [ ] 1 lb, 10 ounce ground beef, preferably 80/20 (You may also substitute ground turkey, adding 2 Tbsp room-temperature butter to compensate for the lean turkey)
- [ ] 5 1/3 ounces (about 1 generous cup) yellow onion, diced small
- [ ] 2 2/3 ounces (about 2/3 cup) celery, diced small
- [ ] 1 1/2 tsp neutral oil or butter, for sweating vegetables
- [ ] Canola or olive oil, as needed, for searing
- [ ] 1/3 cup water, for deglazing
- [ ] 5 to 6 cups brown mushroom gravy

PANADE

Directions

1. **Prep the vegetables:** In a sauté pan, sweat onions and celery in oil or butter over medium heat until fully softened and most moisture is cooked off. Do not brown hard.
2. Spread on a plate and cool completely.
3. **Make the panade:** Combine breadcrumbs and milk. Let hydrate for 5 minutes, then mix in the beaten egg.
4. **Build seasoning base:** Combine cooled onion-celery mixture, panade, Worcerstershire, soy sauce, tomato paste, garlic powder, onion powder, thyme, paprika, allspice, and parsley (if using).
5. **Add the beef:** Add ground beef (or ground turkey) and kosher salt. Mix gently but thoroughly until cohesive and evenly seasoned. Do not overwork.
6. Portion meat into 4 patties, about 8 ounces each. Shape into oval chopped steaks about 3/4 inch thick.
7. Chill at least 30 minutes before searing so the patties retain shape.

- [ ] 2 ounces (about 1/2 cup) plain fine dry breadcrumbs
- [ ] 1/2 cup whole milk
- [ ] 2/3 large egg, lightly beaten (You may also use one whole egg)

SEASONING BASE

- [ ] 1 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- [ ] 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- [ ] 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- [ ] 1/2 tsp soy sauce
- [ ] 1 tsp tomato paste
- [ ] 1/4 generous tsp garlic powder
- [ ] 1/4 generous tsp dried thyme
- [ ] Small pinch to 1/8 tsp paprika
- [ ] Pinch ground allspice
- [ ] 1 Tbsp chopped parsley (optional)

WILD MUSHROOM BROWN GRAVY

- [ ] 6 ounces of butter
- [ ] 1 1/2 lbs yellow onion, thinly sliced or diced small
- [ ] 4 ounces celery, diced small
- [ ] 2 ounces minced garlic
- [ ] 1 lb sliced cremini mushrooms
- [ ] 8 ounces shiitake mushrooms, sliced and stemmed
- [ ] 8 ounces oyster mushrooms, torn or sliced
- [ ] 6 ounces all-purpose flour
- [ ] 3/4 cup red wine
- [ ] 1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce
- [ ] 2 Tbsp soy sauce
- [ ] 1 gallon hot water
- [ ] 4 ounces beef base, such as Better Than Bouillon
- [ ] 1 Tbsp chopped fresh thyme, or 1 tsp dried thyme
- [ ] 2 bay leaves
- [ ] 1 Tbsp black pepper
- [ ] 1 Tbsp kosher salt, adjusted to taste (Chef Woods adjusts the salt with beef base, if needed)

8. **Start the gravy:** Meanwhile, melt butter over medium heat in a heavy pot or Dutch oven. Add onions and celery. Cook over medium heat until softened and lightly caramelized.
9. Add all mushrooms, cooking until they release their liquid and the mixture begins to concentrate. Add minced garlic and cook for one minute more.
10. When the pan is nearly dry, sprinkle flour evenly over vegetables and mushrooms. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, for about 3 minutes to cook out the raw flour taste.
11. Add red wine and stir well, scraping the bottom of the pot. Add Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, hot water, beef base thyme, bay leaves, black pepper, and 1 Tbsp kosher salt. Whisk or stir thoroughly to dissolve the beef base and prevent lumps.
12. Bring to a simmer, then cook gently for 30 to 45 minutes, stirring occasionally until the gravy is developed and lightly reduced.
13. Remove bay leaves. Taste and adjust with additional beef base, salt, pepper, or Worcestershire, as needed.
14. **Sear the steaks:** Put a lightly oiled skillet or braiser over medium-high heat. Sear patties until well browned on both sides. (Patties do not need to be fully cooked yet)
15. **Deglaze:** Briefly remove patties and set on a plate. Add 1/3 cup water to the pan and scrape up the browned bits.
16. **Finish in gravy:** Add mushroom brown gravy and return patties to the pan. Simmer gently until cooked through and tender, about 15 to 25 minutes, depending on thickness. Adjust gravy thickness as needed.
17. Serve over egg noodles, mashed potatoes, or white rice.

The story

This week, we're sharing the Salisbury steak recipe from Southern restaurant {S}table at Dunwoody Village. While you may associate Salisbury steak with TV dinners, the dish's origins actually lie in the Civil War.

Salisbury steak was created by Dr. James Salisbury, who studied germ theory and the link between diet and health in the mid-19th century. One of his studies entailed feeding a group of healthy men a diet of coffee and baked beans, and later, a month-long oatmeal-only diet. Oatmeal is not a balanced diet, so the participants ended up dizzy and "very flatulent." At the end of the experiment, he gave participants a 10-ounce steak with butter, pepper, and salt and noticed that they perked up afterward.

Some years later, Salisbury volunteered as a physician for Union troops in the Civil War. Combined with his previous research, Salisbury reasoned that soldiers' diet , which primarily consisted of hardtack biscuits, contributed to weakness and susceptibility to digestive woes. Salisbury's solution was implementing a mostly meat diet on soldiers suffering from illnesses, including consumption, diabetes, and diarrhea. His preferred meat: lean beef patties.

Over the years, Salisbury steak evolved from a health fad into a convenient, hearty dinner and was even featured in the "Cookbook of the U.S. Navy." The dish as we know it today is more comfort food than prescription diet, and gets its trademark taste from cooking the beef patties in gravy.

{S}table chef Camron Woods recommends not making adjustments to the gravy until after the steak is cooked in it. In fact, he suggests starting the gravy a day in advance for enhanced flavor.

"[The] entire dish is amazing prepared ahead. This allows you to remove any fat that rises to the top," Woods said.

Serves 4 people

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