INDIRECT · MEDIUM

Uzbek Lamb Samsa on the Kamado, Tandyr Style

Uzbek samsa bakes in a clay tandyr, and a kamado is thick ceramic with a narrow mouth and radiant heat: the same physics. Here it sits on a stone, not slapped on the wall, filled with knife-cut lamb and plenty of onion.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
60 min	35 min	6	230 °C

Ingredients

- **500 g** plain wheat flour
- **280 ml** warm water
- **10 g** salt for the dough
- **120 g** softened butter
- **600 g** lamb shoulder
- **100 g** lamb fat (or pork lard)
- **500 g** onion
- **1.5 cdita** cumin seed (zira)
- **1 cdita** ground coriander
- **1 cdita** freshly ground black pepper
- **1.5 cdita** salt for the filling
- **1 ud** egg, for glazing
- **2 cda** sesame seeds (or nigella)

Method

1 KNEAD AND REST

Mix the flour with the salt, add the warm water and knead for 8-10 minutes until you have a smooth, fairly firm dough, much like an unleavened bread dough. Shape it into a ball, cover with cling film and rest it for 40 minutes at room temperature. The gluten relaxes over that time and the dough will then roll out very thin without springing back.

2 CHOP THE FILLING

Knife-cut the lamb into five or six millimetre dice and chop the fat even finer. Dice the onion small and mix everything with the cumin seed crushed in a mortar, the coriander, the pepper and the salt for the filling. Add no water and no oil: the onion will supply all the liquid. Keep the bowl in the fridge until you are ready to fill.

3 LAMINATE THE DOUGH

Roll the dough into a rectangle two or three millimetres thick and spread the softened butter over the whole surface with your hand or a spatula. Roll it up into a cylinder without compressing it too hard, stretch that cylinder with your hands to almost twice its length and chill it for 30 minutes. Then cut it into twelve equal portions.

4 SET UP THE KAMADO

Light the kamado for indirect cooking, fit the Big Green Egg ConvEGGtor legs up and set the Navaris cordierite stone on top of it. Stabilise the dome at 230 °C with the top vent nearly open and let the stone soak up heat for a good 30 minutes; with the Ooni infrared thermometer the surface should read between 210 and 230 °C.

5 SHAPE THE TRIANGLES

Stand each portion on end with the spiral facing up, flatten it with your palm and roll it into a disc about twelve centimetres across, slightly thicker in the middle. Spoon on two heaped tablespoons of filling, around eighty grams, and close it into a triangle by folding three sides into the centre. Seal the seams by pinching them hard.

6 GLAZE AND SEED

Turn each samsa over so the seams sit underneath and place them on the 14-inch Ooni perforated peel dusted with flour. Brush the tops with beaten egg, keeping it off the edges so it doesn't run, and scatter the sesame seeds, pressing them in lightly with a finger so they don't fly off inside the kamado.

7 BAKE ON THE STONE

Slide the samsa onto the stone leaving three fingers between them and shut the lid quickly so you don't bleed heat. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes at 230 °C without opening for the first twenty; after that, rotate them once if the back of the stone is colouring faster. They are done when the tops are deep gold and the bases sound dry when you tap them.

8 REST AND SERVE

Lift them off with the peel and rest them for five to ten minutes on a rack: the juice inside is boiling and needs to settle, and meanwhile the base finishes drying rather than sweating on a plate. Serve with quick-pickled red onion or a tomato salad. They are eaten with your hands, as they are in Uzbekistan.

Editor's tips

- Seal them properly and set them seam-side down: any juice that escapes caramelises on the stone and welds the base to it within minutes.
- If you can't find lamb fat, add sixty grams of cold diced butter to the filling; without fat, knife-cut meat simply dries out.

- Crush the cumin seed in a mortar just before mixing: pre-ground cumin from a jar carries half the aroma that defines samsa.
- If you bake in two batches, give the stone eight to ten minutes with the lid closed to recover before the second load goes in.

Gear for this recipe

Big Green Egg Large

mikamado.es/en/kamados/big-green-egg-large

Carboext 100% Holm Oak Lump Charcoal, 15 kg Sack

With a butter-laminated dough shut inside the dome for half an hour, the aroma of the fuel ends up between the layers. This additive-free holm oak charcoal burns clean and leaves little ash, so the bottom vent doesn't clog and holding 230 °C stops being a fight. Its fifteen kilos cover the stone's long preheat and both baking batches without opening the kamado to refuel.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/carboext-encina-15kg

Onlyfire GCG-8552 Cooking System (2 grates + rack + 2 deflectors) for Large Kamado

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/onlyfire-gcg8552-sistema-coccion

Navaris Cordierite Pizza Stone Rectangular XL (38×30×1.5 cm)

The filling goes in raw and the onion starts weeping the moment it warms: if the base doesn't set fast, the samsa opens and welds itself to the stone. This rectangular cordierite slab, a centimetre and a half thick, banks heat through the thirty-minute preheat and gives it back all at once on contact, sealing the bottom in the first minutes. Its 38 × 30 cm hold half a dozen triangles a batch, three fingers apart.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/navaris-piedra-pizza-rect-38x30

H&H Mortaio: 18 cm white marble mortar with pestle

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/hh-mortero-marmol-blanco-18cm

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/samsa-uzbeka-cordero-kamado

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