



REBECCA PATOILE

The Polo Players' Foxhunting Braai

BY MARC PATOILE

While polo is played in South Africa, they have no mounted foxhunting there, so why we have a South African braai after a foxhunt, put on by the polo players who are members of the hunt, is a bit hard to explain. In any event, it's become one of the best hunt breakfasts of the year, and since none of our regular season hunt breakfasts are served before lunchtime, it is also hard to explain why we still call them breakfasts. Think Argentine asado and you have the right idea, which is probably why the polo players love throwing this barbeque feast for the hunt's followers. And our lone South African foxhunter probably wouldn't let us change the name of the barbeque from braai to asado, as the event is now legendary.

Meats are the star of the South African braai. They typically include *boerewors* (South African sausage), *sosaties* (skewered meats), kebabs, marinated chicken, pork

and lamb chops, steaks, sausages of different flavors and thickness, and possibly even a rack or two of spareribs. In coastal areas, fish and rock lobster (commonly called "crayfish" or *kreef* in Afrikaans) are also popular additions to the braai. A main offering of the meal is *pap*, actually a thickened porridge, or the *krummelpap* (crumb porridge), traditionally eaten with the meat. Made from finely ground corn/maize (similar to polenta), it is a staple of local African communities and may be eaten with a tomato and onion sauce, monkeygland sauce (not made from monkey glands but rather a piquant blend of spices and fruit), or the more spicy *chakalaka* (a.k.a. trains-mash — veggie relish) at a braai. The pap is cooked in a potjie pot, which is a cast iron kettle, typically with three legs, made to sit on or near the fireside. Various side dishes and sauces are also contributed by guests in a potluck fashion.

Marge & Mim's Jalapeño Jelly

- 6 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 1/2 cups vinegar
- 2 large green bell peppers
- 12 jalapeños and 7 habaneros
- 1/2 dash salt
- 2 envelopes Certo
- splash of green food coloring

Roast the jalapeños and peel before putting them in the food processor. De-seed and fine grind or blenderize jalapeños. De-seed and grind or blenderize bell peppers. Combine all ingredients and fast boil for exactly 5 minutes. (May need a hair dryer to keep the foam down.) Remove from heat and add Certo. Boil for exactly 1 minute more. Add green food coloring.

Our favorite adaptation of the braai's traditional grilled meats goes like this at the Arapahoe Hunt, in a kicked-up Colorado style:

Take a de-boned leg of lamb. Hit like hell with a steak-tenderizing mallet to make it well flat. Massage with olive oil, sprinkle with coarse sea salt (fleur de sel de Guérande is best). Cover generously with herbes de Provence, so that the meat becomes nearly covered. Grill on both sides for about five minutes per side, depending on thickness and how you prefer your lamb. Serve with jalapeño jelly (above). ▀



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The potjie pot, a three-legged cast iron skillet, is made to sit on or near the fire and contains pap.