

# Biltong recipe – Rugby World Cup 2015

If you've ever attended a gathering of rugby supporters, braai aficionados or generally any group of 2 or more South Africans, there's bound to be some biltong or droëwors as part of the snack ensemble.

With the price of biltong in the region of about R250/kg it could seriously make a dent in your pocket with all the World Cup Rugby 2015 games in the tournament.

So why not make your own with this quick and easy biltong recipe? Biltong usually calls for the cheaper topside or silverside cuts of beef which means you'll be munching away at your own signature biltong at a fraction of the price of the ready-made variety. And you get double-points for being able to make your own.

Naturally you could also make biltong from ostrich, chicken, bacon or any other game meat.



Since summer is upon us, making biltong in the cold confines of the garage in winter becomes less of an option, so rather opt for a quick biltong maker. I use the [Mellerware Biltong King, biltong maker and hydrator](#) which you can find almost everywhere. Expect to pay in the region of R250-R500 for a box. Shop around, there are some specials at the moment.

For this biltong recipe I used [Smoked Flavours' Liquid Smoke](#). The hickory smoke flavour in my last batch of biltong was an incredible hit with family and friends. So I will definitely

be doing that again.

The biltong spice comes from our local butchery, [Country Meat](#). We found this mix to work the best for us. Try some of their biltong first, and if you like it just get one of their biltong kits. It contains between 2-3kg of biltong meat and a sachet of biltong spice.

For complete decadence – try Country Meat's waygu beef biltong. It has at an eye-watering price, but it is pretty good.

If you want to make your own biltong spice, just combine 1/2 cup ground coriander, 2 Tbs ground black pepper, 1/2 cup sea salt (not pouring or table salt – Himalayan pink salt works wonders) and 2 Tbs brown sugar. Taste the mix and adjust to fit the flavour profile you're trying to achieve. You could also add some smoked paprika to the mix.

On with the biltong recipe then.

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Depending on the weather conditions (warm weather vs. cooler temperature), the cuts of meat (thicker strips vs. thinner strips), how you like your meat (soft or hard), the drying time could vary from 24 hours to 5 days. The biltong maker is quite efficient, so it doesn't take that long before you can sample your first batch.

Basically if you start by latest on Wednesday, you could have your very own batch of biltong ready for the World Cup Rugby game on Saturday.

And that's a win in anyone's books – regardless of how the team performs.

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# Paprika – some like it sweet, smoked or hot

Sweet, smoked or hot – paprika spice comes in different flavours and colours but one thing is sure we love it.

I mentioned before that I'm pretty partial to smoked paprika and as a result many of my dishes tend to include a liberal sprinkling of this heavenly spice.

Paprika is a spice made from ground, dried fruits of bell pepper or chilli pepper varieties or mixtures thereof. It is often used for flavour and colour, and turns out to be the fourth most consumed spice in the world.

Until recently I had some Spanish smoked paprika which is rather mild in heat but has a distinctive oak flavour. I've yet to find smoked paprika around Johannesburg and I'm always on the look out for this spice on my overseas travels. On my last trip to Austria, I finally managed to find [Rigler's](#), a shop in Salzburg that stocked smoked paprika – but as my luck would have it the shop was closed when we arrived on the Saturday and many shops were closed on Sunday.



Rigler's Salzburg spice deli

On the last night before we left Vienna, an expat South African and I went out for dinner at the [Vienna Naschmarkt](#). Lo and behold! A spice merchant with tonnes of paprika of every flavour and colour. To say I was beside myself was perhaps a bit of an understatement. I stocked up on both the sweet and smoked varieties.



I left Austria a very happy camper and very much looking forward to try out some new recipes with my new spice find. Unintended but quite interestingly, my hand luggage smelled like smoked paprika for days after returning back to South Africa.

For inspiration, paprika can be used in a variety of dishes adding just the right amount of smoky flavour and colour. Try using paprika in some of these lamb, pork, chicken, fish, vegetable or sauce recipes:

- Lamb – [Slow roast leg of lamb with garlic, rosemary, paprika rub](#)
- Pork – [Pulled pork sliders with sweet potato buns](#)
- Chicken – [Stuffed roast chicken for Sunday lunch](#)
- Fish – [Tuna fishcakes with paprika lemon mayonnaise](#)
- Sauces – [Barbeque sauce](#)

Happy cooking.

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# Explosion of taste

We take a break from our usual recipe posts to bring you something pretty awesome. What happens when you rig a couple of tons of herbs and spices to explosives, shoot it with high speed cameras and set the result to music?

You get [The Sound of Taste](#) from [Grey London](#).

*Several tons of black peppercorns, cardamom, turmeric, paprika, cumin seeds, ginger, chilli and coriander were rigged to explode in perfect sync with a bespoke musical composition. Each explosion represents an individual piano note or chord, which when filmed at high speed, creates a surreal three dimensional sound scape.*

Makes you want to go blow up your spice rack for the fun of it. Please do not try this at home.

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# Moroccan mince with couscous



After visiting Morocco earlier this year and receiving a tagine as a Christmas gift, we felt like something Moroccan inspired for our post gammon and turkey hangover. This Moroccan mince with couscous dish is extremely simple to make and ready in about 30 minutes.

Serves 4

### **Ingredients**

- 500g beef mince
- 2 T olive oil
- 1 large onion
- 1 T ground cumin
- 1 t ground cinnamon
- 2 t ground turmeric
- 100g dried apricots, chopped
- 500ml vegetable stock
- 1 cup couscous
- zest of 2 lemons
- knob of butter
- 4 T fresh mint, chopped
- 50g unsalted cashews, toasted



## Method

1. Heat the oil in a large nonstick pan, add onions and cook gently for 5 minutes until soft.
2. Stir in the spices, coating the onions, then add the mince and fry till brown.
3. Add the apricots and stock and bring to the boil, then turn the heat down and cook gently for 10-15 minutes.
4. Add couscous into a bowl and cover with just boiled water. Once it has absorbed all the water, fork through a knob of butter, lemon zest and mint to give it a nice fluffy texture. Season to taste.
5. To assemble, spoon couscous onto serving plate, pile the mince mixture on top and scatter with the cashews.

## Note

We have some Ras-el-hanout spice from Morocco which gives the dish a bit more complex flavours where up to 30 or more different spices could be in the mix, so you could use that instead of the cumin, cinnamon and turmeric suggested in the recipe. Ras-el-hanout can now be found at most good Pick-n-Pay stores.

South Africans may also have noticed some slight similarities in flavour between this Moroccan dish from North Africa and the [traditional South African bobotie recipe](#). The kids therefore asked that we add some slices of banana and sprinkle some coconut on their portions. Nothing wrong with adding a dollop of chutney too while you're at it.

Traditionally, Moroccans serve their couscous with seven vegetables, so if you want to bulk up the dish with some oven grilled veggies such as courgettes, red peppers, aubergines, red onions, butternut, carrots, parsnips and leeks then just chop them up, drizzle some olive oil, coat with harissa (chili kick), salt and pepper and pop them into an oven at 180 C for 30 mins or until cooked and caramelised.