

^{fine} Cooking

Handmade sausages from an old-fashioned grocery store

BY LAURA GIANNATEMPO



To make his fresh sausages, Richard Schwartzberg first grinds the meat with a standard electric meat grinder.



Next, he adds different seasonings, depending on the kind of sausage he's making, and thoroughly mixes the meat and seasonings by hand.

"Mixing well is very important; you have to knead the meat almost like dough," he says, "so the flavorings get distributed evenly."

He feeds the mixture into a sausage stuffer and fills long links of sausage. He likes to use a hand-cranked machine because it's slower than mechanized versions, allowing him to have more control over the results.

Richard then twists the sausage into smaller links, lets them dry, and arranges them in the display case, ready for customers to buy.



Imagine an old-fashioned neighborhood grocery store where the staff is friendly and knowledgeable, the owner sometimes comes out to greet his customers, and the butcher knows meat inside out and can give you precious advice on cuts to buy and how to cook them. No, that grocery store didn't close in 1975—it's still thriving in Santa Monica, California. It's called Bob's Market, and that butcher is Richard Schwartzberg.

Richard began cutting meat when he was 14. During summer breaks from school he worked with a local butcher who took him under his wing and taught him the secrets of the craft. At 18, he was the youngest journeyman butcher in the union, and he's been cutting meat ever since. Under his expert supervision, Bob's Market has one of the best meat departments in the Los Angeles area and offers more than 12 varieties of fresh, handmade sausages.

With the help of Fabian Roman, Richard makes at least 10 fresh batches every morning. Varieties range from sweet Italian, andouille, and chorizo to his own creations, like pork and pecorino sausage with fresh herbs. He also custom-makes sausages for customers, provided they come in with a recipe and are ready to buy at least 5 pounds.

Richard makes all his sausages by hand, using only a meat grinder and a hand-cranked sausage stuffer. He uses high-quality meat and natural hog casings as well as fresh herbs, spices, and aromatics, including freshly chopped onions and garlic. And you can taste it. These sausages are juicy and rich, with clean, vibrant herb and spice flavors. *Bob's Market's sausages can be purchased in person at the store; they are not available by mail-order. For more information, call 310-452-1114.* ♦