

Here Comes Summer - Let's Get Grillin'!

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A Note From Chef Dave



It is that time of year again to pull out the grill and get ready for those summer time cookouts. I have to admit that grilled food, if done right, can create some of the best meals ever. To grill successfully, you must understand how and why this cooking method works. Grilling is a dry cooking method, where a gas flame or a hot charcoal briquette is 3 to 4 inches below a metal or cast iron grate. The food is then slow cooked to a perfect temperature. The hot, dry heat sears in the juices which

keeps the food moist, and depending on the cut, tender. The charcoal or flame adds a distinct flavor and a look that cannot be duplicated by imitation gimmicks such as a George Foreman Grill. In case you didn't know, this is not a grill since it steams your food, and in most cases, causes your meat to become tough and flavorless when cooked. I must admit it does add a few pretty grill line marks on the food, but that's the only positive thing I can say!

In this newsletter, I will be going over which steaks work well for grilling, the difference between grades of beef, and how to get the best cut of beef for the best value. If you ever asked yourself, "Where's the Beef?" after reading this, you will know! On your grill!

Cook Smart...

Chef Dave



"Grilling takes the formality out of entertaining. Everyone wants to get involved."

- Bobby Flay

Charcoal Versus Gas Grilling

Grilling over charcoal provides exceptional browning and searing that a gas grill cannot duplicate. In addition, the charcoal adds a distinct smoke flavor. It is important to make sure your charcoal is lit and the coal has lost its flame and has a 90% grayish color. Using a charcoal grill requires almost a 30 minute preparation time to get the coals just right before grilling.

On the other hand, a gas grill is consistent when it comes to heat and delivering the same result when used. In addition, little start time is required before grilling. Gas grills can cost 3 to 4 times more than a charcoal grill so before buying, shop and compare prices.

So, what do I use? I use a gas grill more often because it is an extension of my kitchen and I grill almost year round. I do own a charcoal grill and on occasion, I do use it. The flavor is better but like most people, time is an issue.

Beef Temperature Guide

Doneness	Chef Standards	USDA Recommendations
Rare	120 - 125 Degrees F	N/A
Medium-Rare	125 - 135 Degrees F	145 Degrees F
Medium	135 - 145 Degrees F	160 Degrees F
Well	150 + Degrees F	170 Degrees F



Which Steak Makes the Cut?

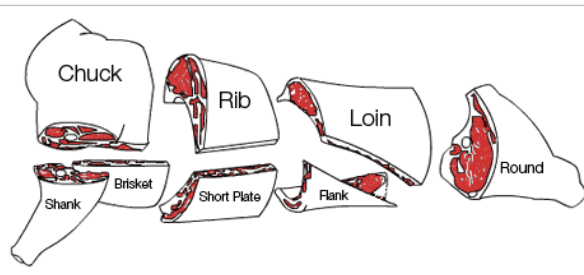
USDA Beef Grades

There are eight beef grades through the U.S. Department of Agriculture but the ones we will be talking about are going to be the three most commonly available to consumers. The grades are used to classify the meat according to marbling and age of the beef.

Prime: Prime meat is heavily marbled which makes for a tender and flavorful steak. In addition, only a small percentage (2%) of graded beef is prime. Prime meats are generally served in restaurants and sold in high-end grocery stores.

Choice: The majority of graded beef is graded choice. Choice is moderately marbled and is still tender but the flavor is not as great as prime.

Select: Select beef has very little marbling and is therefore drier, tougher, and has less flavor than prime and choice cuts when cooked.



Chuck Steaks:

The chuck section, also known as the shoulder area, includes the first 5 ribs as well as the shoulder blade bone. A majority of the cuts made from this area are NOT suitable for grilling or quick high heat

cooking. In most cases, chuck steaks are downright tough and in some cuts, contains large amount of gristle and fat.

Rib Steaks:

The rib section is located just behind the chuck/shoulder area and contains ribs 6 through 12. This is where the prime rib roast is found. The steaks from this rib section are of high quality with just the right amount of marbling and great texture and tenderness. In case I'm invited to your place for steaks, my favorite cut is from this area! Drum roll please...the rib-eye, in my own words, is "awesome!"

Short Loin Steaks:

The short loin section is located just behind the rib section, in the upper middle area of the back. Steaks cut from the short loin are of great quality. The tenderloin, which is known for its tenderness and rich flavor, is found here. In addition, the T-bone and porterhouse steaks are cut from this section.

Sirloin Steaks:

The sirloin section is behind the loin section and in some areas of the country is referred to as the hip area. Sirloin steaks are fairly large but thin and the meat is not as tender as the short loin cuts, but still has great flavor. These steaks tend to be lean and rather dry when grilled.

Flank Steak:

The flank steak is located on the underside belly area, directly below the short loin and sirloin. Steaks from this area have a rich beef flavor but must be sliced thin and against the grain to keep the texture of the meat from being chewy.

Chef Dave's Secret Dry Steak Rub

***Serving Information: Rub for six 1-inch steaks*

A dry rub is a mixture of dried seasoning and dried herbs mixed together and rubbed on beef, poultry, pork or fish. In addition, dry rubs are generally applied and left on the meat for 2-4 hours or overnight to allow the rub to penetrate the meat.

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary

Directions:

1. Place all herbs and spices into a small bowl and mix well.
2. Using your hands, divide dry rub evenly over six steaks and rub all sides until the rub is evenly coated.
3. Refrigerate for 2 hours.
4. Grill meat to desired temperature over medium heat.
5. This is great on beef, pork, poultry, seafood or fish.

For this month's newsletter, Chef Dave cited the following websites: www.usda.gov; www.beefitswhatsfordinner.org.



Beef Steak Guide

The following guide was designed to help you decide which steak is best for you when it comes to your budget and the tenderness of the cut:

Chuck Steak

Top blade (*only cut suitable for grilling from the chuck shoulder area*):

Tenderness: ★★★

Flavor: ★★★

Cost: \$

These steaks are cut from the shoulder. The **positive** is that top blade steaks are tender. The **negative** is that they have a line of gristle running down the center. Chuck steaks are **also known as** flatiron steaks or blade steaks.

Rib Steak

Rib and Rib-Eye

Tenderness: ★★★

Flavor: ★★★

Cost: \$\$\$

These steaks are cut from rib section 6 through 12 and are usually found with the rib bone attached at a restaurant. In the grocery store, the bones are generally removed and cut into steaks and known as the rib-eye. When the bone is removed but not cut into steaks, most refer to this as prime rib. The **positive** is that rib steaks are moist, tender and generally have a great flavor. The **negative** of this cut of beef is the cost. The rib-eye is **also known as** spencer steak in the west and delmonico steak in New York.

Short Loin Steak

Top Loin:

Tenderness: ★★★

Flavor: ★★★

Cost: \$\$\$

A long, narrow steak that is sold bone-in and boneless. This steak is often confused with the sirloin strip and it is not even close! The **positive** of this cut is that it has slightly less fat than a rib-eye and has a good flavor. The **negative** is that it can be slightly chewy and have a more notable grain texture. Short loin steak is **also known as** boneless top loin, strip steak, Kansas City strip, New York strip, or hotel steak.

Tenderloin:

Tenderness: ★★★★★

Flavor: ★★

Cost: \$\$\$\$

This long, round boneless cut is the most tender meat on the cow. It can be cut into several different cuts and each cut has its own name. *Chateaubriand* is a 3 inch cut steak cut from the thickest part of the tenderloin and is usually large enough to serve two. *Filet mignon* is typically 1 to 2 inches thick, cut from the narrow end of the tenderloin. *Tournedos* are the smallest tenderloin steaks. As the name implies, the **positive** of this cut is that it is extremely tender. The **negatives** are that it does not have much of a beef flavor and the cost is high.

T-Bone:

Tenderness: ★★★

Flavor: ★★★

Cost: \$\$\$

The T-shaped bone in this steak separates the long, narrow strip of the top loin and a small piece of the tenderloin. The **positive** of this cut is that it has great texture and flavor and the **negative** is its cost.

Porterhouse:

Tenderness: ★★★

Flavor: ★★★

Cost: \$\$\$

The porterhouse is just a huge T-bone steak but contains a larger tenderloin section. It is cut farther back in the animal. Much like the T-bone, the **positive** of the Porterhouse is its texture and flavor and the **negative** is its cost.

Sirloin Steaks

Round-Bone, Shell Sirloin or Top Sirloin:

Tenderness: ★★

Flavor: ★★

Cost: \$

The sirloin or hip section has several different cuts including the pin- or hip-bone steak, flat-bone steak, round bone steak, and wedge bone steak. Of all of these cuts, the round bone steak is the best in my opinion. The other cuts are also hard to find in the local grocery stores because they are not as tender. Again, do not confuse these cuts with the top loin. The **positive** of this cut is the cost and the **negative** is that it tends to be a bit chewy if under or over cooked (the perfect temperature for this steak is medium) and it can be grainy in texture.

Flank Steak

Flank:

Tenderness: ★★

Flavor: ★★★

Cost: \$\$

Flank steak is a large, thin, flat cut with a distinct grain. To minimize the chewy nature of this cut, it should be cooked past medium and should always be sliced thin and against the grain. The **positive** of this cut is the cost and the **negative** is that it tends to be chewy if under cooked (the perfect temperature for this steak is medium well) and grainy in texture. Flank steak is **also known as** jiffy steak.

Chef Dave's Herbed Steak Paste

****Serving Information: Paste for six 1-inch steaks**

A paste is a mixture of dry herbs and spices with the addition of liquid to form a paste. It is then rubbed over beef, pork, poultry, or fish and grilled over **low** heat (using too high of heat may cause the paste to burn).

Ingredients:

1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon Worcestershire Sauce
1/2 teaspoon olive oil
1 teaspoon lemon juice

Directions:

1. Place all ingredients into a small mixing bowl and mix into a paste.
2. Using your hands, divide paste evenly over six steaks and rub all sides until the steaks are evenly coated.
3. Let stand refrigerated for 2 hours.
4. Grill steak to desired temperature over medium heat.
5. This is great on beef, pork, poultry, seafood or fish.
6. ENJOY!

From Our Medical Director— Kent Sasse, MD, MPH, FACS, FACRS**



How To Prepare for Weight Loss Surgery

Once you have made the decision to proceed with a weight loss procedure and made your choice of procedure, you are entering the pre-operative phase of weight loss surgery.

At this point, you will be working with a weight loss program through the surgeon's practice. If you have insurance, the program you are working with will be in the process of obtaining pre-approval for the procedure. Meanwhile, you will be working on additional steps required by the program. At Western Bariatric Institute, these steps are going to involve consultations with a psychologist, a nutritionist or dietitian, and attending some support groups.

For some people, this all feels intrusive. They have made the decision to proceed and now that is exactly what they want to do - proceed! Others use this time for exactly what it is meant for - education and growth. With a couple of months to go before the operation, this is a time for learning everything possible, a time for maximum education about the whole process, the entire weight loss journey.

Books

To begin with, I think it is a terrific idea to buy a book or two on the subject. That way you will understand things that might not have made sense to you when they were explained in the sometimes intimidating clinical setting, and you can look up answers to sudden questions that occur to you at 4:00am when your surgeon is at home, asleep, not available to answer them!

(continued on next page)

****Kent C. Sasse, MD, is the Medical Director for Western Bariatric Institute and the International Metabolic Institute, also known as iMetabolic, based out of Reno, Nevada. Dr. Sasse's book, The Sasse Guide to Outpatient Weight Loss Surgery, will be released in the Summer of 2008 and is available for pre-order now. To learn more about the science and medicine of successful weight loss, please visit www.sasseguide.com.**

From Our Medical Director - *Continued*

There are several good texts out there on bariatric surgery including *Weight Loss Surgery for Dummies* by Kurian, Thompson and Davidson, and *Bariatric Support: Crossing Over to a New You*, by Williamson, both available from most bookstores, and the *Sasse Guide to Outpatient Weight Loss Surgery*, available at Western Bariatric Institute for pre-order.

Audio CD's and Audio mp3 Programs

Expose your brain to some positive messages and valuable tips about weight loss success, health and fitness. It is said that we all are exposed to over 20,000 messages about food and sweets and carbohydrates during the course of the year. Think of the billboards, TV commercials, and radio ads your senses take in every day. How many of those are telling your brain you should eat more goodies and load up on calories. That's right - a lot of them!

You can change the messages your brain is receiving by going out and finding some high quality audio programs that promote good scientific principles and techniques for eating healthier and becoming fitter.

Visit www.AudioDiets.com to view a selection of audio programs designed to reinforce sound principles of weight loss success. You can listen to these audio programs in your car or at home, and use the expert advice to make your weight loss surgery a great success.

Support Groups

It is an excellent idea to start attending support group meetings at your bariatric surgical center on a regular basis. At Western Bariatric Institute, we offer monthly groups, with many different groups in different parts of town, so in our area it is easy to find one that fits a patient's schedule and geographic location. Your surgeon's office will know what support groups are available in your area.

Support groups serve a number of purposes, but in addition to fulfilling the important goal of learning about the weight loss operation you are going to undergo, it is a place you can meet people who are also about to embark on the same journey you are going to follow, and those people who have already started. You will meet patients and their loved ones who are at the same point in the process that you are, as well as those in different places. And you can make friends with people who have had common problems and now have common goals.

Support groups present opportunities to ask questions about the experiences of people who have already had their surgeries. You can ask questions you were too embarrassed to ask your surgeon or nursing staff or that you just keep forgetting to ask. You can ask questions your surgeon might not be able to answer because the surgeon has not experienced the operation from the inside out - unlike the person standing in front of you at a support group.

You may also meet people at support groups whose recoveries did not go smoothly. While nine times out of ten weight loss surgery goes as planned with no complications or problems, if you meet someone whose operation was difficult, you have a chance to ask some questions. What were the complications? How did they happen? Was the surgeon caring and conscientious and committed to making sure everything came out all right so that there was a successful outcome? This is valuable information from people whose journeys may have diverged from the path yours will most likely take in the hands of an experienced surgeon.

Pre-Operative Classes

Pre-operative classes will vary from program to program. But on the whole, most weight loss programs will include a series of pre-operative classes aimed at providing additional tools for long-term weight loss success.

One thing you have to remember: weight loss procedures do not work in a vacuum. It is not a miracle cure that works solely by itself. Weight loss procedures work *with you*. That is one of the first things I tell patients. No surgery works by itself. No surgery is foolproof. Every surgery can be undermined. There is no operation that can be done that will guarantee success in the long term. The only thing that is absolutely definitive in predicting success is *your total and complete commitment to success*.

If you can commit to making your weight loss operation a success, if you have done your homework, found the right surgeon, and you are willing to do the work before and after the operation, you have got a fantastic chance of success!