

Great Grilling

Heat Up Your Grilling Game

(NAPSA)—Eighty percent of U.S. households have an outdoor barbecue, grill or smoker, according to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association and more than 95 percent of Americans have cooked outdoors in the past year.

To help your grilling, Russ Faulk, author of “Cook:Out,” shares some techniques.

Grilling 101: Getting Started

Tame the Flame—First, choose your fuel: gas, charcoal or wood.

“A gas flame contains water vapor, producing a heat that is more moist than charcoal,” he said. “Gas grilling provides convenient and consistent heat. You can cook anything with it but you won’t get the same kind of flavorful crust on meats that you can with charcoal.”

Charcoal fires produce a dry heat with a subtle, smoky flavor. This heat can be intensely hot for searing or low and subdued for barbecue. Quality charcoal can be identified by how little ash it leaves. Lump burns hotter and faster, while briquettes have a slow, steady burn. If you prefer briquettes, look for all-natural varieties without chemical binders.

The smoke from a wood fire offers additional flavor. The easiest way to grill with wood is mixing dry wood chunks with lump charcoal before lighting the fire. The flavor is subtler when grilling with wood than it is when smoking and different foods take on the flavor at different rates. Whitefish fillets, for example, pick up more wood-fired flavor than beefsteaks. Fruitwoods such as apple and cherry add a “sweet smokiness.”

While some grills provide multiple fuel sources—the Hybrid Fire Grill by Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet can cook with gas, charcoal or wood—finding one that suits your cooking style is key.

Heat—There are two types of heat: direct and indirect.

Direct grilling places food directly above the fire. It’s for foods that cook quickly, such as thin chicken breasts, corn on the cob and burgers.

Indirect grilling places the food in an area of the grill with no fire.



These days, grilling could be considered a national pastime.

The heat is offset from the food and the grill lid is closed. This is for foods that cook more slowly, such as whole chickens and pork loin roasts.

“The magic of grilling happens when you work the direct and indirect grilling zones together,” said Faulk.

Build a hot fire on one side of the grill—around 850° F—leaving the other with an air temperature at about 500° F. For a two-inch-thick steak, sear for one minute on each side. Then move it to the indirect zone and close the lid. Turn it over every five minutes, closing the lid again each time till the meat reaches the desired internal temperature.

Advanced Grilling: The Next Level

Faulk suggests two more techniques.

Plank It—Grill the food on top of a board that has been thoroughly soaked to produce smoke and add flavor. Keep the grilling temperature below 450° F.

Roast It—Spatchcock or butterfly a fryer chicken by cutting out its backbone so it lies flat. Brush with olive oil, sprinkle with sea salt, and lay it skin side up in the indirect zone. Roast at 500° F until fully cooked. This should take only 35 minutes.

To learn more grilling techniques and see recipes, visit: <http://kalamazoogourmet.com/life-style/resources/grilling-techniques/>