

# Cooking Contest Corner

## National Beef Cook-Off Celebrates Its 25th Anniversary

(NAPSA)—With her quick and simple recipe for Grilled Steaks Balsamico, Lori Welander of Richmond, Va., won the 25th National Beef Cook-Off worth \$50,000 in cash and a new GE Profile Oven with Trivection Technology. Welander competed against 20 finalists selected from 3,000 entrants from throughout the country.

The 2003 competition focused on ways busy families get dinner on the table. Selected by a panel of leading food professionals, Grilled Steaks Balsamico uses just four ingredients and takes just 30 minutes to prepare.

The judges raved about the clever blend of balsamic vinaigrette and fig preserves that created a flavorful marinade for the flat iron steaks, grilled and served with melted herb-and-garlic cheese.

“Beef has so much flavor to begin with, so all I had to do was add a few interesting twists and I had a real family pleaser,” said Welander. After winning the \$50,000 “Best of Beef” grand prize, she exclaimed, “I make recipes that are quick, simple and delicious so I can spend more time with what matters most—my family!”

This year marks the National Beef Cook-Off’s 25th anniversary. In addition to emphasizing quick family meals, this year’s Cook-Off inspired finalists to enjoy the best that beef has to offer, such as fresh beef—including the industry’s newest beef cuts, like the flat iron steaks—as well as convenient beef products, such as Hormel refrigerated fully cooked Beef Roast with Au Jus and Hormel refrigerated fully cooked Beef Tips with Gravy, that the Beef Check-off Program has awarded its Mark of Quality.

“The longevity of the Cook-Off is evidence of America’s enduring



**This recipe for Grilled Steaks Balsamico earned its creator a \$50,000 grand prize.**

love and enjoyment of beef,” said Grady Spears, 2003 Cook-Off spokesperson, owner of The Chisholm Club restaurant and author of *The Texas Cowboy Kitchen*.

The grand prize recipe reflects the trend toward easier cooking methods using more flavorful, convenient ingredients. Other recipes, including Ginger Beef & Noodle Bowls and South Pacific Steak, reflect the continuing love for ethnic dishes. Nontraditional ingredients, such as dark sesame oil, mango chutney, hoisin sauce and fresh pineapple, found their way into more recipes as well. In addition, more contestants relied on time-saving ingredients, such as refrigerated fully cooked taco sauce with seasoned ground beef, and refrigerated fully cooked shredded beef in barbecue sauce.

The Cook-Off attracted thousands of entrants, who competed in four categories: One Dish Meals, Grilled Beef, Handheld Kid Pleasers and Quick & Easy Beef. Recipes were judged on taste, ease of preparation and appearance.

To obtain a free winning recipe

brochure, mail a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope to: NBCO Prize Winning Recipes, ANCW, P.O. Box 3881, Englewood, CO 80155.

### Grilled Steaks Balsamico

*Prep and Cooking Time: 30 min.*

*Marinating Time: 2 hours*

- 4 beef shoulder top blade (flat iron) steaks (6 to 8 oz. each) or boneless beef chuck eye steaks, cut 1 inch thick**
- Salt and freshly ground pepper**
- 1 package (5.2 oz.) herb and garlic soft spreadable cheese**

### *Marinade:*

- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup prepared balsamic vinaigrette**
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fig preserves or chopped dried figs**

**1. Place marinade ingredients in blender or food processor; process until blended. Place steaks and marinade in food-safe plastic bag; turn to coat. Close bag securely and marinate in refrigerator at least 2 hours.**

**2. Remove steaks from marinade; discard marinade. Place steaks on grill over medium, ash-covered coals. Grill steaks, covered, 10 to 14 minutes for medium-rare to medium doneness, turning occasionally. Season with salt and pepper, as desired.**

**3. Meanwhile, heat cheese in small saucepan over medium-low heat 2 to 4 minutes or until melted, stirring frequently.**

**4. Serve steaks with cheese sauce.**

*Makes 4 servings.*