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30TH ANNIVERSARY

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The thrill of the grill

Try these 30 expert tips at your next cookout

WOOSTER, Ohio - Aug. 26, 2008 - Many people believe grilling great steaks is a challenge best left to the pros. But with a little know-how and a few tricks of the trade, delicious and mouthwatering grilled dishes are a snap. Not only is grilling a quick, economical and healthy way to cook, it's fun, too.

Fire up the grill tonight! In celebration of its 30th anniversary, the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand offers 30 tried-and-true expert grilling tips:

1. Marbling in beef helps assure its tenderness and juiciness once it's grilled – not to mention all the great flavor it provides! Marbling is those little white flecks of flavor within the meat. Look for lots of little bits scattered evenly throughout the steak. As the steak cooks, those morsels will melt and effectively “baste” the meat from the inside out.
2. There's good reason that popular steaks like filet mignon, ribeye, strip steaks, Porterhouse and T-bones are featured on steakhouse menus across the globe. These classic cuts always perform well on the grill, offering robust beef flavor and pleasing texture.
3. Many economical cuts are great on the grill as well. Don't be afraid to try something new. Look for cuts including top sirloin, flat iron and flank steak for robust beef taste at a lower price. A bonus: several of these cuts are lower in fat, as well.
4. Be sure to start with the best product available. For steaks, burgers and other beef, look for the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand. Ten strict specifications ensure every bite is selected to offer mouthwatering flavor, juiciness and tenderness.

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5. Always keep safety in mind. When lighting a gas grill, keep the top open until it's lit. Use and store propane cylinders outdoors in an upright position. After grilling, turn the burners off and close the cylinder valve.
6. When using a charcoal grill, choose hard briquettes. Light them in a chimney starter instead of using lighter fluid, which can impart off-flavors into your meal. Stack briquettes in a pyramid until they're nice and hot – they will develop a white, ash-covered appearance when they are ready. (If they're still flaming, they're not ready yet!) Spread them out and use their radiant heat for cooking.
7. If you're using a good cut of beef with lots of marbling, there's no need to marinate or use fancy seasonings. A little kosher salt and cracked black pepper will allow the steak flavor to shine.
8. If you do want to give a steak some extra flair by incorporating complementary flavors, use a dry rub. Blend your spices and herbs first, then gently pat them onto all of the surfaces of your steak before grilling.
9. Whether it's with salt, pepper or a custom rub, keep your hand a foot or more above the meat when seasoning. This technique helps distribute the spices more evenly.
10. Marinades are a good choice for cuts of beef that are less tender, such as a top round, bottom round or sirloin tip steak. Marinades should include at least one acidic ingredient, such as wine or vinegar, to help tenderize the meat, plus other flavorful components like herbs and spices.
11. When you're making kabobs, be sure to soak bamboo or wooden skewers in water overnight to prevent burning. To keep your kabob ingredients from twisting around, use two or more skewers in each to firmly secure them.
12. Use aluminum foil to make grill-friendly pouches for cooking side dishes. Take a sheet of foil (heavy-duty foil will tear less easily) and place your ingredients – especially those with lots of moisture or small pieces, such as chopped vegetables – in the center. Then, bunch up the top, leaving a small opening as a vent. This technique dramatically increases the versatility of your grill.
13. Everyone loves burgers – and stuffed burgers are an easy, gourmet twist. First, form thin patties – you'll need two for each burger. In the middle of one patty, place ingredients such as blue cheese, portabella mushrooms, caramelized onions or roasted red peppers. Then, top with a second patty and seal the burger firmly around the edges. Grill until ground beef reaches a minimum 160°F.
14. Cleaning a grill can be messy. Make it simple by preheating your grill, then using a wad of aluminum foil to do the dirty work. Clasp the foil ball in your tongs and “scrub” away. (Note: experts recommend leaving the grill dirty after you're finished cooking, then cleaning it immediately before its next use. The residue helps protect the grill grid in between meals.)
15. Always start with a preheated grill. When you place your steaks on, they should sizzle. Searing meat on the grill helps lock in juices and gives it wonderful, rich flavors due to the caramelization of its exterior.

16. Don't flip your steaks too often. Place meat on the grill, let it sear and cook on that side before flipping it over to do the same on the other side. Flipping meat too often makes it lose its natural juices too quickly and dry out.
17. Always use tongs or a spatula – not a fork – to turn meat. Piercing the meat allows its flavorful juices to escape.
18. Any cook can make fancy diamond grill marks on steaks – it just takes a little practice. First, place your steak on the grill vertically (with ends at 12 and 6 o'clock). Once the meat has seared, after approximately two minutes, turn it 45 degrees clockwise (with ends at 2 o'clock and 8 o'clock). After that side has cooked another two minutes, flip the steaks over in the same position (with ends again at 2 and 8 o'clock). Cook for two minutes, then finish the steaks by turning them counterclockwise 45 degrees (with ends at 12 and 6 o'clock) for another two minutes.
19. Always cover your grill while cooking – don't keep the lid open and allow that valuable heat to escape! A covered grill helps food cook more quickly and evenly, as the heat is allowed to circulate around all sides of your ingredients.
20. The best way to control flames is keeping the grill lid closed as much as possible. Before cooking, trim any excess fat from steaks to help avoid flare-ups. Keep a small spray bottle of water handy to extinguish any unexpected flames.
21. Where there's smoke, there's flavor. Turn your backyard grill into a smoker by placing some wood chips that have been soaked thoroughly in water into a grill-safe pan. After you put your meat on the grill and close the lid, the smoke from the wood chips will impart its inimitable flavor and aroma.
22. Experts agree that bone-in steaks have a better, richer flavor than their boneless counterparts. Take note, though: bone-in steaks will require a longer cooking time.
23. Grilling is not an exact science, and cooking time is determined by a number of variables. These include the cut selected, the thickness of the steak, the grill temperature, the desired degree of doneness and much more. Practice makes perfect – you'll soon learn how to get the results you prefer.
24. Most experts say cooking a steak to medium rare ensures the best flavor and tenderness, but personal preference varies. Cook rare steaks to 140°F, medium rare steaks to 145°F, medium steaks to 160°F, and well done steaks to 170°F. Ground beef and burgers should always be cooked to 160°F.
25. A meat thermometer is the most accurate way to measure the internal temperature of your meat. Place it in the thickest part of the item – usually in the middle – away from any bone or fat.
26. Fire up your grill, not your oven, the next time you cook a roast. The secret is using indirect heat. After searing the outside of the roast on the hottest part of the grill, cook it low and slow on a cooler area of the grill. The best part: easy cleanup – with no need to heat up your kitchen.

27. Some grills are equipped with rotisseries, on which many cuts of beef will fare well. Try tenderloin, a sirloin tip roast or a tri-tip for incredible flavor and tenderness.
28. After your meat is finished cooking, remove it from the grill and let it rest. Tent the clean plate loosely with foil to help keep the meat warm. Resting cooked meat several minutes before cutting allows the juices to redistribute throughout the meat so they don't escape onto the plate when cut.
29. Never use the same dishes and utensils on raw and cooked meats. After raw meat has been put on the grill, set the dirty plate aside and get a new, clean plate ready for the meat when it is cooked and ready to serve.
30. Top off the perfect meal with a grilled dessert. Grilled fruit is especially flavorful, and putting slices of pound cake or angel food cake on the grill gives them delicious crunchy edges.

The *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand is a cut above USDA Prime, Choice and Select. Enjoyed for its flavor, tenderness and juiciness, the brand is Angus beef at its best[®]. Less than 8% of beef can achieve the brand's benchmark standards, always ensuring a mouthwatering experience. It is proudly offered at more than 12,500 restaurants and retailers throughout the United States and internationally. For more information, visit www.certifiedangusbeef.com.

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