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ESSENTIALS

TECHNIQUES FOR
S M O K I N G



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SMOKED PRIME RIB

SERVES 6 TO 8

The most difficult part of cooking a standing rib roast is paying for it. Save it for special occasions when you have something big to celebrate but don't have all day to cook. Once you've slow-smoked a standing rib roast, you'll never put one in the oven again, I promise. This recipe features a simple slather, which is a mixture of flavorings (usually without sweeteners) that you can brush on the exterior of the meat to keep it moist and help it get a good bark (also known as a crust or coating). Some examples of simple slathers might be American mustard over a pork butt or a combination of Dijon mustard and mayonnaise over a salmon fillet to be smoked. For a robust rib roast, use a heavier wood smoke flavor like mesquite, or get a medium smoke flavor from pecan, apple, cherry, oak, or hickory wood. This rib roast smokes for 3 hours, so it's better to cook this on a charcoal grill/smoker or water smoker than a gas grill.

SUGGESTED WOOD: Mesquite (use half as much as the other woods), pecan, apple, or cherry



INGREDIENTS

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoon granulated garlic

½ teaspoon fine sea salt

One 3-pound standing rib roast, ribs cut away from the bones, attached at the wide end, and secured with string

½ cup mesquite or 1 cup other wood chips, soaked in water and drained



METHOD

1. Fill your charcoal chimney with briquets, set the chimney on the bottom grill grate, and light or prepare a fire in your smoker. Oil the grill grate. In a bowl, combine the olive oil, pepper, garlic, and salt and stir to blend. Use your hands or a basting brush to slather the rib roast with this mixture.
2. When the coals are ready, dump them into the bottom of your grill, and spread them evenly across half. Scatter the wood chips on the hot coals. Place the roast, fat side up, on the indirect side. When the smoke starts to rise, close the lid. Place a candy thermometer in the lid vent of a charcoal grill or smoker.
3. Smoke the ribs at 225° to 250°F. After 2 hours, add more coals if necessary. At this point, using clean welder's gloves or long-handled tongs, turn the roast completely around so that the opposite side is closest to the coals. Close the lid and cook for 1 more hour. After 3 hours, the roast should be tender and juicy, slightly beyond medium-rare, about 140°F. When it has reached your desired level of doneness, remove it from the smoker and let it sit for 15 minutes before slicing. Slice the rib bones off first before slicing meat portions.

FRUITWOOD-SMOKED DUCK WITH A CIDER-HONEY MOP

SERVES 4

Thanks to Burt Culver of Culver Farms in Indiana, farm-raised domestic duck has made its way into the mainstream of barbecue entrées. Because ducks are naturally fattier than chickens and turkeys, you'll need a drip pan beneath the duck to prevent a pit fire. Fill the pan with liquid—water, vinegar, beer, or whatever you like—and place it on the bottom of your grill next to the coals. The steam from this drip pan also helps keep food moist—some barbecuers use a drip or water pan with everything they barbecue. I like to cook duck over fruitwood, as the sweet smoke matches the sweetness of the meat. Serve this with cannellini beans and chopped red bell pepper tossed together in a vinaigrette, and grilled or steamed fresh asparagus.

SUGGESTED WOOD: Apple, peach, or cherry

