

1965

EC65-938 Patio Cooking

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Patio Cooking

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PATIO COOKING

By Ethel Diedrichsen
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Eating out-of-doors is one of the summer season pleasures. Children love it, families thrive on it, and adults find barbecuing an easy and informal way to entertain. Host and hostess can mingle with the guests while the food is cooking and appetites are whetted by meat sizzling over charcoal. Husbands may parade their culinary abilities without messing up the kitchen.

EQUIPMENT

Good equipment is important for successful patio cooking. A simple grill consists of a grate over a bed of coals. More elaborate grills have adjustable grates which can be raised or lowered to control the speed of cooking.

Automatic spits are ideal for cooking roasts, poultry and spareribs. A variety of accessory pieces includes skillet, skewers, coffee pot, long handled tongs, sprinkling bottle and salt and pepper shakers. A serving cart to roll food and equipment to the cooking area saves many steps.

BUILDING THE FIRE

Line the bottom of the fire bowl with heavy duty aluminum foil for easier cleaning. Place one inch of gravel or porous substance on top of this. Stack charcoal briquets in a pyramid shape; moisten with charcoal lighting fluid and let stand for a minute before lighting.

When the surface of the briquets is covered with gray ash, spread the coals evenly and the fire is ready for cooking. When more fuel is needed, add briquets around the edges and rake them in when they are covered with ash. Do not pour fluid on briquets after lighting.

For faster starting, an electric starter may be used. Or, punch large holes around the lower edge of a tin can and remove the bottom. Place bottom side down in the fire bowl. Fill the can with briquets, soak with lighting fluid and light. When briquets are covered with ash, remove can with pliers or tongs and spread coals for cooking.

Avoid using more charcoal than necessary. Six briquets for a medium-sized T-bone steak will be enough. Be sure the ventilation is adequate when the grill is used inside the garage or other covered area.

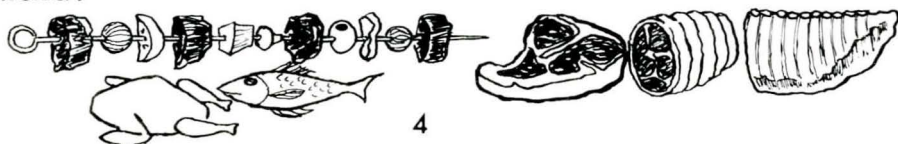
The best method for controlling speed of cooking is to raise or lower the grill on which the food rests. To reduce the heat of a charcoal fire, use an asbestos pad under pots and pans, spread out the coals or sprinkle them lightly with water. Increase the heat by fanning the fire or knocking ash off the coals.

FOR SMOKE FLAVOR

Wood chips of hickory, oak or fruit wood give an extra smoke flavor to meat. Soak chips in water at least 20 minutes before using so they will not burn. Add a few chips at a time while the food is cooking. Smoker-type barbecue units have a hood which can be closed to retain smoke during cooking. Liquid smokes are sometimes used in marinades and basting sauces for that smoky flavor. Chicken, Cornish game hen, turkey, pork and some fish and seafoods are excellent when smoked.

CUTS OF MEAT

Any cut of meat cooked by roasting or broiling may be selected for outdoor cooking. Roasts, steaks, chops and meat patties are commonly used. Cured or smoked meats such as bacon, Canadian-style bacon, ham and sausage are other choices. Poultry, fish, kabobs, frankfurters or spareribs add interesting items to the menu.



Steak

Select fine quality porterhouse, sirloin, T-bone, rib or club steaks for broiling. Trim excess fat so drippings won't flare up. A sprinkle of water, sand or salt will quench the fire should any occur.

Slash the fat edge at intervals to keep steak flat. For extra flavor, rub steak with clove of garlic or brush with barbecue sauce. When coals are hot, rub grill top with fat trimmings and put on the steak. Turn with tongs when the first side is browned. If you use a fork instead of tongs, be sure the tines go into the fat part so you will not lose good juices. Turn steak only once.

Season browned side with salt and pepper. Continue broiling until done as desired. Allow 20 minutes total time for one-inch steak cooked medium-rare. A two-inch steak will take about 35 or 40 minutes. Top with pats of butter, mushroom or barbecue sauce and serve sizzling hot.

Hamburger

For the best hamburgers, be sure to use good quality ground beef without excess fat. Handle meat lightly and shape into patties. Too much handling will make dry, compact patties. Broil one side until brown, turn and complete broiling.

For a change of flavor, add sweet basil, thyme, celery salt or chili powder to the ground beef before broiling. Insert a piece of blue cheese, chopped onion or pickle relish in the center of the patty or add a slice of Cheddar cheese on top when the hamburger is almost done. Serve on toasted buns with garlic or herb butter.

Another method of cooking hamburger is in foil. Mix seasonings, chopped onion or grated cheese with the ground beef. Wrap in aluminum foil and place on the grill. Turn occasionally with tongs. The slow cooking retains the juices and gives the hamburger a meatier flavor than when it is cooked directly over the coals.

RECIPES

Grilled Ham with Hawaiian Sauce

1/2 cup pineapple juice

1/4 cup brown sugar

1 tablespoon vinegar

1 tablespoon mustard

1/2 teaspoon ginger

Cured ham slice, one-inch thick

Combine ingredients for sauce and pour over ham. Let stand for one hour at room temperature or several hours in refrigerator. Then broil ham 15 to 20 minutes, turning and brushing with sauce occasionally. Heat remaining sauce and serve with ham.

Broiled Chicken

Select broiler-fryers weighing 2 to 3 1/2 pounds. Have chicken cut in halves or quarters and allow 1/2 chicken per person. Brush chicken with melted butter, margarine or cooking oil. Place pieces on grill with cut side down. The bones act as heat conductors and hurry the cooking. Brush with fat and turn frequently. Chicken is done when the wings pull away easily from the body. Season with salt and pepper. Brush skin side with fruit glaze or jelly during last few minutes if desired.

Barbecued Spareribs

Allow 3/4 to 1 pound of ribs per person; season with salt and pepper. Broil slowly over coals 45 to 60 minutes. Turn often and baste the last 20 minutes with your favorite barbecue sauce. For speedy barbecued ribs, partially cook meat indoors; then grill for a short time over coals for an outdoor finish. The following sauce may be used for basting:

1 cup tomato sauce or catsup

1 teaspoon dry mustard

1/4 cup red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon Worcestershire
sauce

Few drops Tabasco

Kabobs

Kabobs are made by combining pieces of meat with assorted vegetables and fruits and roasting them on a skewer. Cut the meat in 1 to 1 1/2 inch cubes and use pieces or small whole vegetables or fruit. Alternate the foods on one skewer or string each kind separately. Skewers that are square, twisted or flat will hold the food better. Grease them by sticking them into a piece of suet. Baste kabobs with fat and turn often during barbecuing. Make your selection from the following foods:

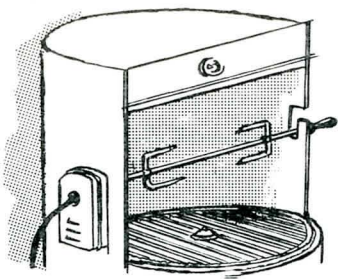
Meats and Seafoods	Vegetables	Fruits
Shoulder or leg of lamb	Canned potatoes	Raw apples
Sirloin tips or round steak	Green pepper	Bananas
"Fully cooked" ham	Zucchini squash	Raw or cooked apricots
Bologna	Small whole tomatoes	Raw or cooked peaches
Link sausage	Canned onions	Pineapple chunks
Frankfurters	Egg plant	Maraschino cherries
Chicken livers	Mushrooms	Spiced apples
Shrimp, oysters, scallops wrapped in bacon	Cucumbers	Pitted ripe olives
	Gherkins	

Fish

Fish steaks and fillets are easiest to cook when packaged in foil. Add seasonings, pat of butter or strip of bacon, lemon juice or onion as desired. Fold the foil tightly, place on grill and turn occasionally with tongs while roasting. At mealtime, slit foil and serve right in the package.

Trout is excellent with melted butter and garlic salt or onion salt brushed on the skin.

Small pieces of fish may be dipped in a coating made by combining 1/3 cup flour, 1/4 cup cooking oil, 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper and fried in a skillet. Turn with tongs and spatula. When brown, season with salt and pepper and serve.



HOW TO USE A SPIT

A motorized spit on your barbecue unit makes it possible to roast beef, pork, or ham and whole poultry. With addition of a spit basket you can easily cook chops, spareribs, chicken parts, small whole fish and lobster tails.

For all spit barbecuing, you will need a drip pan to catch fat and drippings from the meat. Arrange the briquets in the fire bowl from the center of the grill to the back. Place the drip pan under the meat in front of the burning briquets.

Holding forks are used to secure the meat on the spit rod. These are inserted at opposite ends of the roast and fastened securely. When barbecuing Cornish hens or other small birds you can increase the capacity by putting the birds on the rod crosswise and alternating heads and tails. Use a spit fork for every two birds.

Boned, rolled roasts of beef, pork and ham should be wrapped with heavy twine at two-inch intervals. The wings of poultry need to be tied to hold them flat against the body. The spit rod is inserted at the neck and run through the body cavity parallel to the backbone. The legs and tail are then tied to the spit rod.

Large whole fish can also be cooked on the spit. Close the body cavity with small skewers at one-inch intervals. Lace with heavy twine, run the rod lengthwise through the fish and proceed with the cooking.

Balance of Spit

The meat must be balanced on the spit. Check the balance by rolling the rod back and forth lightly between the hands. If out of balance, the meat will tip and the forks need to be reset. Poor balance affects the turning of the spit and puts a great strain on the motor.

How to Use a Thermometer

A meat thermometer is the best guide to determine when a roast or turkey is done. Insert the thermometer so the tip rests in the thickest part of the meat. In poultry the tip should rest in the thickest part of the thigh. It should not touch the spit or bone or rest in fat. Always insert the thermometer at an angle so it will not hit the briquets or the hood of the grill as it rotates.

How to Use Spit Basket

Use of a spit basket eliminates the close watching necessary when cooking on the grill. Arrange the food close together in the basket and fasten the top as tightly as possible. If the food is not packed evenly and the cover is not tight enough, the food may shift and unbalance the spit action. Time for cooking in the spit basket is a little longer than when cooking on the grill.

MARINADES AND SAUCES

Marinades and sauces help to accent the flavor of meat cooked on a grill or spit. Marinades give flavor to meat before cooking. They are likely to be thinner and more highly seasoned than basting sauces but the same sauce may be used either way.

Basting sauces keep meat moist during cooking and give it a subtle flavor. For steaks and beef kabobs, select a well-seasoned sauce that is fairly rich in oil. For pork chops or ribs, use less fat and lots of chili sauce or catsup. Oil and garlic go well with lamb. Soy sauce will give a brown glaze to veal and thin steaks that are slow in browning. A delicately seasoned sauce of oil and herbs blends well with fish and chicken. Use a narrow paint brush to spread sauces on meats or vegetables as they cook.

OTHER RECIPES

Most of the attention in patio cooking is given to the meat. To complete the meal, you may add crisp salad, bread toasted over coals and fresh fruit or your favorite dessert with lots of hot coffee. Your guests will be glad they came.

Striped Potatoes

4 medium baking potatoes
1/4 cup butter or margarine,
melted
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon dry mustard

2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon cooking sherry
(if desired)
1 teaspoon sugar
Salt and pepper

Cook potatoes in jackets in boiling salted water until just done, about 30 minutes. Drain. Meanwhile combine remaining ingredients for sauce. Peel potatoes and cut lengthwise in 3/4 inch slices. Brush potatoes generously with sauce. Broil on grill over hot coals until browned. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Grilled Vegetables

Remove frozen vegetables from package and place on a square of aluminum foil. Season with salt, pepper and a pat or two of butter or margarine. Bring edges of foil up, leave a little space for expansion and seal tightly with double fold. Heat package on grill for about 20 minutes, turning occasionally.

Barbecued Fruit

Place individual servings of raw apples, bananas, peaches or pears on square of aluminum foil. Slice fruit or cut into pieces. Brush with lemon juice, sprinkle with cinnamon and brown sugar, and dot with butter or margarine. Garnish with chopped nuts, coconut or candied ginger. Wrap securely and barbecue on grill about 15 to 20 minutes. Turn several times.

Whole fruit may be grilled in foil without peeling. Core and stuff with raisins and nuts and dot with butter, cinnamon and sugar.

Long Boy Loaf

Slash long French loaf in 1 1/2 inch slices . Make diagonal cuts without cutting through the bottom crust. Cream 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder with 1/2 cup butter or margarine . Spread mixture generously between slices . Wrap loaf in aluminum foil and heat on grill.