

# Here's how to clean and care for your grill

Continued from Page 1

the food item with the proper technique of preparation and adhering to a few basic barbecuing rules.

To verify these rules, one need only consult the man who revolutionized barbecuing in Michigan and introduced the unique taste of mesquite as well — Jim Lark, owner of the West Bloomfield eatery that bears his name.

**LARK BOASTS** the only Health-Department-certified outdoor barbecue in Michigan, which began service in 1982 under the kitchen leadership of Chef Heinz Mengeser. Mengeser has since left but the barbecuing continues today under the creative eye of Chef Marcus Haight.

And when it comes to creative grilling, Chef Keith Famie, proprietor and inspiration for Les Auteurs, "an American Bistro," in Royal Oak, knows his coals. Chef Famie grills extensively and uses a rotisserie in many of his creations. Famie's slight variations of those of Jim Lark and Marcus Haight.

Their combined recommendations are:

Safety first — make sure gas valves and lines are clean and sealed. Be prepared for a fire that may get out of hand by keeping baking soda and water handy to douse unwanted flames. Since pouring straight water on a grease fire will cause the fire to accelerate, a mixture of 1/2 cup of baking soda to 2

cups of water should be kept nearby for dousing.

Wear a bib apron. It is one more layer of protection between you and the fire. Use well-insulated mitts to work near the heat or when opening and closing the barbecue lid.

The barbecue area is a place for kids to be playing while you're cooking. The sides and lid of most barbecues get very hot and are most dangerous. Also, some models have a drip cup in the bottom that can over-throw and cause burns. Reduce the possibilities of getting burned by keeping the kids away from all parts of the barbecue.

**USING HIGH QUALITY** tools will add to your confidence in handling foods on the grill. Have the proper tools ready before you begin to barbecue. Buy only sturdy utensils with a heavier gauge of metal to help handle heavier or delicate foods. You don't want your seafoods sliding off a cheap spatula and into the coals and cheap tongs will bend before they pick up a heavy steak.

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level to low and take the food off the grill if necessary. This will allow the fire to return to a safe cooking temperature and lets the grill reheat. Remember, after putting food on the grill, it has cooled down and requires reheating. Next, raise the level of the grate or lower the bottom, depending on the model.

Hot grates — make sure the grate has had enough time to become searing hot (the hotter, the better) before putting food on it or your foods will likely stick. A hot grate will seal in the juices in meats by instantly closing the tiny pores that can release moisture. Allowing the grill to get sufficiently hot will also speed up the cooking process.

For easier cleaning, line the bottom of the barbecue with heavy-duty aluminum foil, shiny side up to reflect heat. After the coals have completely cooled, clean-up is a cinch. Placing foil on the grate is not recommended as small amounts of aluminum may cook onto the food.

**Barbecuing techniques:** Have all your ingredients on hand before you place the food on the fire. You don't want to have to run for anything. This includes seasonings, serving or holding plates and towels.

Since you will be cooking the moistest part of foods, try to put more moisture in before cooking by marinating when possible.

Continued from Page 1

and silverskin removed

Resist the temptation to flip the food too soon after placing it on the grill. It is necessary to sear any meat that is grilled to reduce moisture loss that can lead to a dry tough product.

Use only firm fish for grilling, such as swordfish, mahi-mahi, cobia, tuna, shrimp, lobster and salmon. Other fish that are flakier may be cooked in or on the grill through indirect heat. Chef Famie recommends creating an open aluminum foil pouch in which the fish sits on top of diced carrots, celery and onion. You then place this pouch on or in the grill where the seafood will pick up the barbecue flavor during cooking.

Wipe oil into the hot grates using a clean rag before grilling fish. Do this quickly and carefully so you don't burn the rag or yourself. Also, brush salad or cooking oil on both sides of the fish for less sticking and more even cooking.

Never mash or press meats on the grill (including hamburgers). This will only press out the moisture, leaving the meat dry and tough. The moisture also helps in cooking by creating a "steaming" effect inside the meat. To avoid mashing hamburgers, make them thinner than usual, as they will shrink slightly and thicken during cooking.

1 cup Holsin sauce (available at most supermarkets and specialty stores) lamb marinate

Place the lamb and marinade in a plastic bag, tie, and place in refrigerator for 48 hours, turning occasionally. Remove lamb from marinade and let stand at room temperature 1 hour before cooking. Cover the bones with aluminum foil and place the lamb on the hot grill upside down. After searing both sides, brush with Holsin sauce and place the lamb on a cooler portion of the grill to finish cooking. Let the lamb rest for 3-5 minutes before carving.

**LAMB MARINADE**

- 1 cup onions, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Cayenne pepper, ground
- 2 teaspoons Coleman's mustard powder
- 2 teaspoons black pepper, ground
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup water

Combine all ingredients.

**SALMON GRILLE CHIEF MARCUS** courtesy of the Lark

- 3 8-ounce fillets of salmon (1-inch thick each)
- 1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes
- 1/2 cup Soppressata or Rosetta de Lycopodium, sliced thin
- 1 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Cut a slit in one side of the salmon fillet lengthwise to form a pocket.

Stuff the fillet with sun-dried tomatoes and sausage. In a shallow pan combine the remainder of the ingredients and mix well. Place fillets in marinade, cover and refrigerate for 5 hours. Remove from oil and scrape off garlic. Place on grill and cook till firm. Serve immediately.

**BURGER GOURMET FOR SIX** courtesy of the Lark

- 6 cups ground sirloin
- 1 cup rouget cheese
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 4 tablespoons chopped shallots
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped garlic
- 4 tablespoons tomato paste
- salt and pepper to taste

Mix all the ingredients together and form into patties. Barbecue and serve in two thick slices of Russian pumpernickel bread with plenty of dijon mustard.

**LIZ'S QUICK BARBECUE SAUCE**, courtesy of Liz (Mrs. Robert) Stricks

- 1 medium onion, minced
- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons molasses
- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 1/2 cup prepared mustard
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon tabasco
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon Spanish paprika

water

Combine all ingredients with water to desired consistency.

## What are the carcinogenic effects of barbecuing?

By Larry Jones  
staff writer

Very seldom do I get stumped. Especially when it comes to checking out the facts. I have a resource list at least two computer pages long with names, numbers, contacts, book listings and reference material.

Still, it has been quite a challenge to bring you up-to-date information concerning the carcinogenic effects of barbecuing.

My findings were, to say the least, surprising.

First, let's define barbecuing.

Most folks like you and me consider barbecuing a matter of lighting up the grill and cooking a few burgers, tube steaks or, especially on paydays, a nice T-Bone. In all honesty, that's what is formally called grilling.

**BARBECUEING** is cooking over a very low fire for an extremely long cooking period. What we do on our weekend Webers comes about as close to authentic barbecuing as short-cut is to real ice cream.

O.K., now that we have the proper definition out in the open, on to cancer and the carcinogenic (cancer-causing) effects of grilling. Realizing, of course, that my expertise lies mainly in food and not in medicine, I am relying on numerous medical

contacts and medical journals for my facts.

As Sherlock Holmes might say, "Mmmmmmm verrrrry interesting." What it all boils down to is that, contrary to popular belief, it has never been proven that grilling causes cancer. A very reputable source on the subject, Dr. Tom Solanik, D.O., a family practice physician responsible for the James' family well-being, stated emphatically that the issue of cancer-causing effects in grilling is actually more theory than fact.

Dr. Solanik went into this rather short sermon about the facts that, yes indeed, when animal meat is cooked over hot coals and the dripping fat falling onto the coals produces smoke, that smoke does re-enter the food.

Of course, in addition to the smoke re-entering the food, we should also be aware of the dye that is used to artificially color our meat.

**BOTH THESE AGENTS** are and can be considered carcinogenic, but the bottom line falls on the person eating the food. Is one person more immune than the other? For that matter, is one person more prone to cancer-causing effects than another?

The answer is definitely yes. Remember the cyclymate scare a few

years back? What finally trickled down was the fact that, yes, cyclymates are harmful if (and that's a mighty big if) you consume bathtubful every day, 365 days a year for 20 years.

Let's face it. How many of us will down animal protein grilled over hot coals so that the fat drips down and makes an intense smoke 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year for a decade or two?

Dr. Solanik summed up our conversation by stating that families with a high incidence of any kind of cancer are at greater risk, mainly because of their genetic makeup, for contracting cancer from grilled foods.

I felt pretty confident talking to Dr. Solanik about the issue but, in all honesty, it sure was tempting to learn more about what the critics say. I mean, what are the facts, as far as they are concerned?

In "Cancer and Nutrition" by Dr. C.B. Simone, M.D., Simone states: "Certain food processing techniques such as smoking and charcoal broiling are known to produce carcinogens . . . The carcinogens which result from charcoal broiling appear to come from fat which drips from the meat and is burned, forming the carcinogens, which then rises up with the smoke, back into the meat. If the fat drippings were eliminated,

the carcinogens would be eliminated also."

**ALL THERE'S** the catch.

What this really boils down to are two basic facts.

**Fact A.** Do you have a genetic background that lends itself to cancer?

**Fact B.** When you grill, having the coals pushed to the side of the grill with a drip pan will virtually eliminate the carcinogenic effects of smoke on your animal protein.

So what does this all mean to the folks like you and me? The advertisement that says, "We do it like you do it," when it comes to flame broiling, really boils down to the per-

son doing the cooking and, even more important, the people eating it.

Not being a fan of red meat, whether it be ground, baked, fried, boiled or broiled, this means that we must individually look at our life-style and overall immune system. Will it or won't it cause cancer?

There is absolutely nothing that states in writing that grilling does cause cancer. Theories abound but the bottom line is you and me. We have the final choice. Nobody can make it for us.

It's like that pack of cigarettes with a warning label almost as big as the name. We all see it. We all know what it means. But the final decision is ours, and ours alone.

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