

the sophisticated grill

For those seeking the perfect score, char, or sear—a more refined way of playing with fire.



The latter-day gourmand is a lucky son of a bitch, eating at a time when molecular gastronomy is all the rage, artisanal ingredients abound in supermarkets, and Viking ranges and Sub-Zeros are becoming standard in upscale homes. But these heady culinary days beg a question: Why should grilling remain a lighter-fluid-drenched backwater where beef patties à la (Burger) King pass for fine cuisine? There is a wide and ever-growing world of epicurean grilling options beyond the weenie roast. Credit the new generation of grills, which provide freedoms and flavors that home chefs have never previously enjoyed. Atop the gourmet-grilling food chain are gleaming devices that enable enterprising types to cook, say, Provençal leg of lamb on one side and marinated cod, at a different heat with a different fuel, on the other. The end results can shine as bright as the grill itself, or even, perhaps, a Michelin star.

BY JAMES OLIVER CURY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CRAIG CUTLER

► 3/4 cup spicy brown mustard
1/4 cup plus 2 tbsp bourbon
3 tbsp olive oil
1/4 cup plus 2 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley
freshly ground black pepper, to taste
3 pork tenderloins, each 3/4 to 1 lb, trimmed
vegetable-oil cooking spray

► **Serves: 4**

1. Combine the mustard, bourbon, oil, thyme, garlic, parsley, and pepper in a bowl, stirring well. Rub into the tenderloins; cover the meat on all sides.
2. Put the tenderloins in a shallow glass or ceramic dish, cover, and set aside at room temperature for no longer than 30 minutes, or refrigerate up to 4 hours. If refrigerated, let the tenderloins stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before grilling.
3. Prepare the grill: Lightly spray the grill rack with vegetable-oil cooking spray. Light the fire and wait until moderately hot.
4. Grill the tenderloins for 12 to 14 minutes, turning with tongs once or twice, until cooked through with an internal temperature of 150 to 155 degrees. Let the pork rest for 10 minutes before slicing; the temperature will rise to 160 degrees during the resting period. Slice thin and serve.

[adapted from *Lobel's Prime Time Grilling*]



For most people, the word *pig* conjures up images of bacon, ham, ribs, chops, and barbecue-sauce-slathered pulled pork. Grilled cuts of pork, however, are more apt to evoke Tuscan than Tennessean cooking: Searing and smoke are old-world porcine pleasures. Your best bet on a grill is the tenderloin, the cut you'll often see sliced into thin medallions. Although tender, succulent, and elegant, it is also lean and therefore needs a marinade, like the one used here. The spicy brown mustard, in this case, adds some kick to the sweetness of the bourbon and the meat itself. And the bourbon? Think of it as a more refined way to add a little Appalachian flavor.



steaks

When you're grilling a steak, the meat (and not the marinade) should be the star. Hence, selection is especially important. The best bets for the grill: porterhouse, rib eye, and sirloin. One appeal of a porterhouse is that it actually consists of two cuts: filet mignon and New York strip. A porterhouse will likely come super-thick (more than two inches tall), in which case you should cook it at a high flame for two minutes to achieve a good sear, move it to a moderate heat for the remainder of the grilling time (see guide at right) to cook it through, and then flip and repeat. Smaller but equally luxurious is the rib eye, known for its beautiful marbling (those glorious, flavor-giving veins of fat) and its juiciness. Sirloin, which tends to be chewier, is the hip cut in several senses: It comes from the animal's hindquarters, it's a bit less expensive than other premium steaks (and thus ideal for a party), and it's increasingly popular at high-end steakhouses. With all these cuts, the key to preparing them to your liking is internal temperature, not color. Finally, remember that all steaks need time to rest after they come off the grill—they'll be juicier that way.

time trial

Keep in mind you may need to adjust these directions based on the type of fuel, the heat of the fire (400 degrees is standard), the weather, whether there's still a bone intact, and other minutiae. All steaks should rest for five minutes before being sliced or served.

1-INCH STEAK

Medium-rare: 4-5 minutes per side/internal temperature: 145°F
 Medium: 6-7 minutes per side/internal temperature: 160°F
 Medium-well: 8-9 minutes per side/internal temperature: 165°F

2-INCH STEAK

Medium-rare: 7-8 minutes per side/internal temperature: 145°F
 Medium: 8-9 minutes per side/internal temperature: 160°F
 Medium-well: 10-11 minutes per side/internal temperature: 165°F

burn this: how to find the right fuel for you



WOOD

OPTIONS: Chips and chunks can be added to charcoal or gas grills to provide smoke flavor; pellets are for Traeger grills; **log wood** is for open grills and smokers. Your best bets: oak (great with beef), hickory (beef, lamb), mesquite (chicken, fish), apple (chicken, pork), and cherry (pork).
PROS: Gives food a smoky flavor; generates great aromas; can be gathered in your backyard.
CONS: Less temperature control, long cooking times, and a great deal of smoke; some woods can overwhelm a food's natural flavors.

CHARCOAL

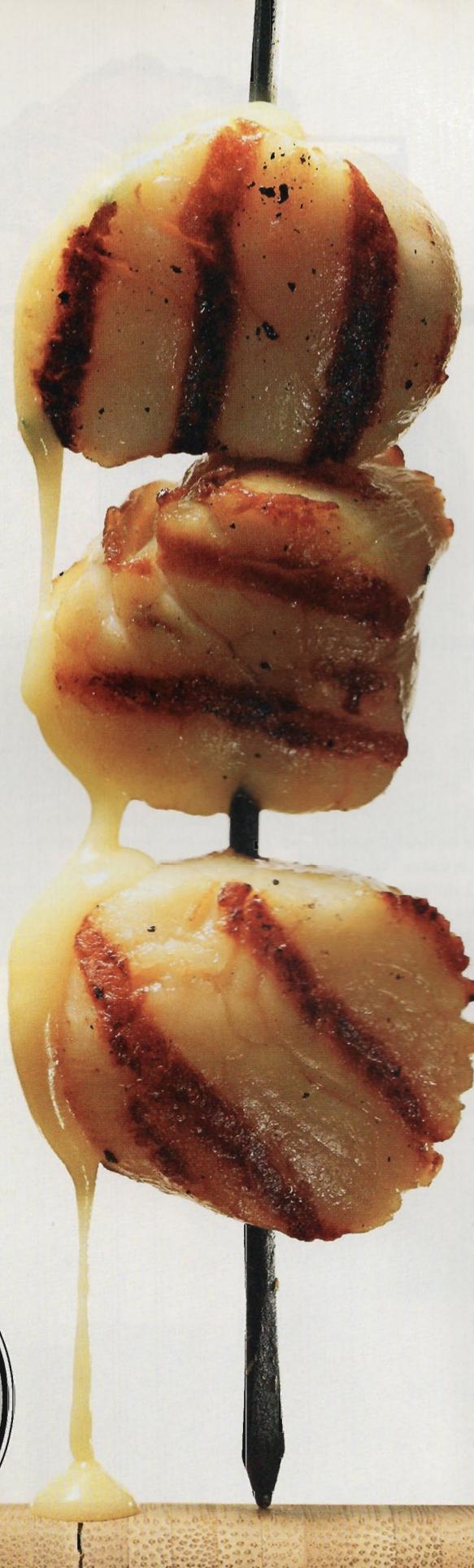
OPTIONS: Briquettes are cheap and ubiquitous; **lump** (or natural) charcoal burns hotter and longer than briquettes (and is preferred by hardcore grillers); **extruded** charcoal, made from compressed-sawdust logs, burns hotter still while producing less smoke and odor.
PROS: Can burn very hot; often inexpensive and easily portable.
CONS: Often difficult to light; once you're cooking, it's hard to adjust the temperature; creates a mess; briquettes can impart a synthetic flavor because of additives.

GAS

OPTIONS: Natural gas (the kind that's piped into homes—and, potentially, your grill) is less expensive but also less powerful than **liquid propane** (which typically comes in a tank and is therefore portable).
PROS: Easy to light; offers a continuous flame, an adjustable temperature, and an easy cleanup; the fuel least likely to give your food impure flavors.
CONS: Requires a gas source, obviously; novices often scorch the outside and undercook the inside of meat.



Like shrimp, sea scallops need very little time on the grill. Unlike shrimp, they don't need deveining, though if you buy scallops whole, they may require shucking. Regardless, grilled sea scallops are worth the effort. They are best served moist, nearly raw in the center, and nicely seared, with grill marks on the outside, which means they should spend only seven minutes on the grill. Complete the dish with this butter sauce (recipe above); it adds layers of complexity by playing the bitter-citrus flavors of orange zest off the aromatic tarragon.

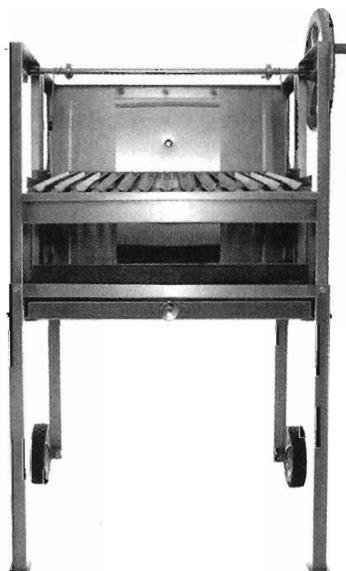


► 1 cup dry white wine, such as Pinot Grigio
2 tbsp white-wine vinegar
2 tbsp chopped shallots
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into 16 equal pieces, chilled
zest of 1 orange
1 tsp chopped fresh tarragon
salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste (for sauce)
16 large sea scallops (2 lbs)
vegetable oil, for brushing
salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste (for scallops)

► **Serves: 4**

1. The sauce: Bring the wine, vinegar, and shallots to a boil in a small saucepan over high heat. Cook until the liquid has reduced to 2 tablespoons, about 10 minutes. Reduce the heat to very low. Whisk in the butter, one piece at a time, until each piece is almost incorporated into the sauce, before adding the next one. The butter should soften into an ivory sauce—it should not melt. Occasionally remove the saucepan from the stove to monitor the heat. You should finish mixing the butter into the sauce within a couple of minutes. Stir in the orange zest and the tarragon, and season with salt and pepper. Transfer the saucepan to a skillet of very hot, though not simmering, water, to keep warm for up to 30 minutes.
2. Lightly oil the grill grate. Sparingly brush the scallops with oil, and season with salt and pepper. Place the scallops over high heat, and cover. Cook until the undersides are seared with grill marks, about 2 minutes. Turn, cover, and sear the other sides, about 2 minutes more. Move to the cooler area of the grill, and cover. Grill until the scallops feel firm when pressed, about 3 minutes.
3. Spoon equal amounts of the sauce on 4 dinner plates. Top each with 4 scallops and serve.

[adapted from *Kingsford Complete Grilling Cookbook*]



wood



gas



charcoal

flame throwers

WOOD: The Grillery

The Grillery is a wood-burning, fire-breathing god in the eyes of gourmet grillers. An adjustable rack moves up and down 16 inches, so you can have the flames either lick your food or stay far away, for slower cooking. The Grillery's twin rotisseries let you place and rotate spits where and when you like (up to four chickens), and a patented "juice recovery system" catches all

the drippings, which can then be used for basting. (\$1,875, grillery.com)

GAS: Lynx 42-Inch Professional Grill With ProSear

What the Lynx lacks in high-tech frills it more than makes up for in size, durability, and quality: Two 25,000-BTU brass burners rely on ceramic briquettes that absorb and redistribute heat evenly over 1,200

square inches of cooking surface. Watch tenderloins rotate on the three-speed infrared rotisserie, or start searing stuff with an infrared burner. The removable smoker box lets barbecue fans play with smoke flavor, and there's even a halogen light on the hood so you can see the difference between rare and medium-rare at any hour. (\$6,719, lynxprofessionalgrills.com)

CHARCOAL: Weber Ranch Kettle

First marketed in 1952, Weber's kettle grill solved all kinds of problems by offering a tall dome (so you can fit a big bird inside), adjustable air vents (so you can control airflow and thus the temperature), and a frame that allows for direct or indirect cooking, depending on where you place the coals; an ash catcher was added later (so the wind doesn't blow crap onto your food). The Ranch Kettle is the pinnacle of the genre: It's shiny and shapely, as well as sizable—its 1,104-square-inch cooking area can accommodate a dozen rib-eye steaks or even a whole lamb. And if you like your food flavored, you can supplement the coal with wood chips or chunks. (\$1,199, weber.com)

wood / charcoal / gas



HYBRID: Kalamazoo Bread Breaker Two Dual Fuel

The Bread Breaker is the rare Swiss Army knife of a grill that works exquisitely whether you're using gas, coal, or wood. And it eliminates any indecision over your choice of fuel by letting you use all three at once. It's got four 25,000-BTU stainless-steel burners spread over 864 square inches, an additional two infrared burners, a rotisserie cradle, and a 32,000-BTU side burner for warming, boiling, and sautéing side dishes while you grill your entrée. In fact, with a pizza stone the Bread Breaker can even bake bread. (\$11,995, kalamazogourmet.com)



Many cooks are scared off by lamb's chewy texture; others marinate the meat to oblivion with powerful wine sauces. But take these words to heart: A good piece of lamb will not taste gamy if it's cooked properly (ideally, medium-rare) and well-seasoned; instead, it will be tender and full of a distinctive flavor that goes nicely with the smoke and searing that a good grill provides. Few things are as impressive to grill as a leg of lamb, which can be cooked with the bone (which takes longer); deboned and flattened (i.e., butterflied); or deboned, rolled, and tied (which makes it easiest to grill uniformly), as suggested here. This simple recipe pairs roasted garlic with a mix of Provencal herbs such as rosemary, thyme, fennel, and basil. Remember, the idea is to complement and bring out lamb's own flavor, not to silence it.

► 1/4 cup roasted-garlic paste
1 tbsp plus 1 tsp Provençal herb rub
(rosemary, thyme, fennel, basil, pepper, salt, garlic salt, ground dried orange peel)
1 boneless leg of lamb (butt end), about 4 lbs
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp kosher salt
1/2 tsp cracked black pepper
oil for coating grill grate

► Serves: 10 to 12

1. Mix the garlic paste and 1 teaspoon of the herb rub together, and rub over the interior of the leg of lamb. Roll the lamb into a compact roast, and tie it in place with heavy-duty kitchen twine.
2. Mix the remaining tablespoon of herb rub with the olive oil, and rub over the outside of the roast. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Heat grill. Brush the grill grate with oil. Put the lamb on the grill away from the heat, cover grill, and cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the breast reads 135°F for medium-rare, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. If you are using charcoal, you may have to replenish the coals after an hour.
4. Remove the lamb and set on a platter with tongs and a spatula. Let rest for 8 to 10 minutes; remove the twine, slice, and serve.

[adapted from *Mastering the Grill*]

For a bonus gourmet grilling recipe (salt-cured duck breast, anyone?), the best artisanal condiments, cookbooks, and places to buy meat and seafood, go to details.com/sophisticatedgrill.