



GRILLING SPECIAL

Smoky Maple Syrup Lemonade

Makes about 2 1/2 quarts or 8 drinks

4 Grilled Lemons

2 quarts warm water

1/2 cup maple syrup, or more if needed

Leaves from 3 sprigs fresh mint

1 dried chipotle pepper (optional)

Ice cubes

Fresh lemon juice, if needed

Squeeze the grilled lemons into a pitcher and drop in two of the halves; discard the rest. Add the water, maple syrup, mint, and chipotle if using. Muddle the mixture with a wooden spoon to extract the most flavor from the ingredients.

Add ice and stir to combine; chill. Taste to see if the sweet/ tart balance is to your liking and adjust with either more maple syrup or a bit of fresh lemon juice. Serve immediately.

BOOZY VERSION: Add 1 ounce Mount Gay rum or vodka to each glass, then pour in the lemonade.

Roasted Red Peppers with Anchovies

Serves 4 as a light lunch or appetizer

3 bell peppers, either red or yellow

1 teaspoon canola oil

6 salt-packed anchovies or 12 oil-packed anchovy fillets

3 tablespoons best-quality extra-virgin olive oil

Leaves from 2 sprigs fresh mint

1 lemon, cut into wedges

Prepare a medium fire grill. Lightly oil the peppers with the canola oil. Place the peppers over the hottest part of the fire until their skins are blackened and the peppers are tender, turning them every few minutes to cook evenly. Place the blackened peppers in a brown paper bag and fold the top closed. This will trap the heat and steam the peppers, making it easier to remove their skins. Set aside until the peppers are cool enough to handle, then gently flake off the burned skin. It should slip right off, but if necessary you can use a knife to gently scrape the pepper clean. Do not wash it! A little burned skin is better than washing away all the flavor. Remove the stem end and discard all the seeds from each pepper. Tear the peppers into 1-inch strips and place them on a serving plate. To serve, arrange the anchovy fillets on top of the pepper strips. Drizzle with the olive oil and scatter the mint leaves over the plate. Serve with lemon wedges on the side.

Escalivada

Serves 4

1 large eggplant

2 red or yellow bell peppers

2 large ripe tomatoes

3 cloves garlic, peels left on

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more if desired

1 lemon, cut in half

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar

Kosher salt

Prepare a medium fire in the grill and flavor it with chunks of a fruitwood. Rub the vegetables with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and place them over the fire in this order: eggplant closest to the fire, but not directly over it; peppers and onions farther out; the garlic and the tomatoes farthest away from the fire. Place the lemon halves, cut side down, directly over the heat and cover the grill. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes, then turn all the vegetables except the tomatoes to ensure that they cook evenly; remove the lemons. Cover the grill and cook until the eggplant is soft and wilting and the onions are beginning to pop out of their skins, about another 20 minutes. Remove everything from the grill and let cool until comfortable to handle.

Cut the eggplant in half, scoop out the flesh in strips, and place them together on a platter. Cut the onions in half, flake the layers apart, discard the skin, and add them to the platter. Scrape the skins from the peppers, cut the flesh into strips, and place them on the platter. Peel and discard the skin from the tomatoes. Cut them into quarters, remove the seeds, cut the flesh into strips, and set them on the platter.

Squeeze the garlic cloves into a small bowl, add the vinegar, the juice of 1 lemon half, and the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil. Whisk to combine and mash the garlic. Pour the sauce over the vegetables, then season them generously with salt. If you like, drizzle them with a little extra olive oil.

Serve immediately or within a few hours at room temperature with the remaining lemon half.

Grilled Shishito Peppers

Serves 6-8 as a pre-meal bite

1 pound shishito peppers

Kosher salt

Place the peppers in a grill basket and set it directly over the flame in a medium fire. Grill until they begin to char and soften, 5 to 7 minutes, tossing them as necessary. Season with salt.

Charred Carrots

Serves 4

2 pounds tender young carrots, tops trimmed

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Kosher salt

1 tablespoon walnut oil or extra-virgin olive oil

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scrub the carrots thoroughly under running water, but do not peel them. Place them in a small pot and barely cover them with water. Add the vinegar and season generously with salt. Bring to a simmer and cook until they are just tender when pierced with the tip of a knife, about 5 minutes. Drain and set the carrots on a baking sheet to cool.

Toss the carrots with the walnut or olive oil, then place them on the grill directly over the coals of a small fire flavored with a few chips of fruitwood. Cook for 6 to 8 minutes, rotating them once so they color evenly. Serve them immediately.

The Steak [a.k.a. “Meat Bacon”]

Serves 4

One 20-ounce NY strip steak cut from the rib end, first or second cut only, kept refrigerated

Kosher salt

2 cups red wine or IPA-style beer

2 cups soy sauce

Build a large fire and let it burn down to coals, about 45 minutes. As soon as you start the fire, season the chilled steak very generously on both sides, using kosher salt for grain-fed beef or the grill salt for grass-fed beef. Let the meat sit at room temperature until the fire is ready. Mix the wine and soy sauce in a baking dish big enough to hold the steak and the liquid, and set aside. When the fire is ready, add 5 or 6 fist-size wood chunks (I like apple wood the best for this, but any wood on the lighter side will work; mesquite or hickory will be too strong.) Allow the wood to flame and then wait 5 minutes.

Sear the steak directly over the coals until it is deeply charred, about 4 minutes.

Flip the steak and sear the other side until it too is charred, about 4 minutes. Remove the steak to the pan of marinade, coating it on both sides. Cover the grill and choke the airflow to kill the flames and slow the fire to a heavily smoking smolder.

Place the meat on the grill away from the fire. Cover the grill. After 1 minute, remove the cover and dip the steak on both sides in the marinade again. Then return it to the same place on the grill, flipping it; then replace the cover.



Repeat this process every 45 seconds to a minute for 30 to 40 minutes, depending on the intensity of the heat. Each time you dip, remember to flip, and keep the grill covered when the steak is on the grate. If necessary, add a few more wood chunks to keep the fire smoking heavily.

Cook the steak to your liking (I suggest medium rare). The steak is medium rare when it feels slightly firm if poked with your finger and when the center no longer bulges out if you squeeze it from the sides. You can also test it with an instant-read thermometer; it should register 125 degrees F in the thickest part (but after all that work, it just seems sacrilege to puncture the meat and release a torrent of delicious juices). Remove the steak from the grill and let it rest standing on its narrow side or on a wire rack for at least 15 minutes.

After the meat has rested, slice it no more than 1/4-inch thick; I prefer 1/8-inch-thick slices. Do not saw the steak. Rather, set the base of a long, thin slicing knife on the beef and draw it through in one clean motion. Do not trim or remove any of the charred fatty pieces—try one, and you'll know why. Serve immediately.