

203 – IN THE WILD

- ❖ PLANKED SALMON WITH JUNIPER AND WILD BERRY GLAZE
- ❖ WINE-MARINATED ELK LOIN WITH WILD MUSHROOM MIXED GRILL
- ❖ SMOKE-ROASTED WILD FRUIT CRUMBLE

PLANKED SALMON WITH JUNIPER AND WILD BERRY GLAZE

Recipe courtesy of Steven Raichlen (unpublished)

Method: Planking

Serves: 4

For the glaze:

2 cups mixed fresh berries (try to use a blend of wild blueberries, marionberries, raspberries, currants, and/or gooseberries)

1/4 tablespoon of pure maple syrup or sugar, or more to taste

Salt and Pepper to taste

For the rub:

5 juniper berries

1 tablespoon black peppercorns

1 tablespoon coarse salt (kosher or sea)

One 1-1/2 pound piece of fresh wild salmon fillet

You'll also need:

1 cedar grilling plank (12 to 14 inches by 6 to 7 inches), soaked in water to cover for 1 hour, then drained. (One easy way to do this is to soak the plank on a rimmed baking sheet. Place a weight on the plank to keep it submerged.)

Make the glaze. Place the berries in a small heavy saucepan with 2 tablespoons water. Cover the pan and cook over medium heat for 2 minutes. Uncover the pan, reduce the heat to medium-low or low and cook until the berries cook down to a jam-like paste, stirring often with a wooden spoon, about 10 minutes. Add a little water if needed--do not let burn. Taste the mixture for sweetness, adding a little sugar or maple syrup to taste if desired. (If the berries you've selected are very sweet, you may not need to add any additional syrup or sugar.)

Make the rub. Place the juniper berries and peppercorns in a spice mill or coffee grinder and grind to a fine powder. Grind in the salt, running the grinder in short bursts.

Set up your grill for indirect grilling and preheat to medium-high (400 degrees F). If working on a charcoal grill, rake the coals into two mounds at opposite sides of the grill and cook the fish in the center. If using a 2 burner gas grill, light one side and cook the fish on the opposite side, rotating the plank 180 degrees half way through cooking. If using a 3 burner gas grill, light the front and rear or left and right burners and cook the fish in the center. If using a 4 to 6 burner gas grill, light the outside burners and cook the fish in the center.

Just before cooking, season the fish on both sides with the juniper rub. Arrange the fish skin side down on the plank. Arrange the plank on the grill away from the heat. Close the grill lid. Indirect grill until the fish is nearly cooked through, about 15 minutes. Drizzle the berry glaze over the salmon in an attractive pattern. Indirect grill for another 5 to 10 minutes or until the fish is cooked through. (When done, a slender metal skewer inserted through the side and left there for 20 seconds will feel hot to the touch when removed). The plank may become singed at the edges, but if you're indirect grilling, it shouldn't catch fire. If it does, extinguish the flames with a squirt gun.

Transfer the fish on its plank to a platter and serve it right off the plank, spooning the remaining berry mixture on top, if desired. Garnish with fresh berries.

WINE-MARINATED ELK LOIN

Source: Adapted from Indoor Grilling, pg. 88

Method: Direct

Serves: 4

Elk or Venison loin, 1-1/2 to 2 pounds

8 to 10 juniper berries, or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup gin

2 teaspoons black peppercorns

1 teaspoon allspice berries

2 sprigs fresh rosemary, chopped, or 1 tablespoon dried rosemary

1 medium onion, diced

3 cloves garlic, peeled and gently crushed with the side of a cleaver

3 strips lemon zest (each $\frac{1}{2}$ by 1-1/2 inches)

1 cup dry red wine

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra virgin olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound sliced bacon

Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper

Place the juniper berries, peppercorns, and rosemary in a large nonreactive bowl and crush them with the back of a wooden spoon to release the aromatic oils. Add the onion, garlic, lemon zest, lemon juice, wine, olive oil, and coarse salt to taste (about 1 teaspoon). Whisk to mix. Set the marinade aside.

Trim any silver skin from the elk loin. Add to the bowl with the marinade, turning to coat evenly. (You can also marinate the elk in a large zip-top type plastic bag.) Let the meat marinate in the refrigerator, covered, for at least 4 hours, or as long as overnight.

Drain the elk, reserving the marinade, and pat dry with paper towels. Reseason with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Wrap the loin in bacon strips, using toothpicks to secure the bacon.

Meanwhile, bring the marinade to a boil over high heat and let boil briskly until the flavors are concentrated, about 3 minutes, skimming any scum that forms on the top. Let cool.

Set up the grill for direct grilling and preheat to medium-high. (Leave one part of the grill unlit to use as a safety zone if needed.)

When ready to cook, brush and oil the grill grate. Place the elk loin on the hot grate and grill, turning with tongs, until cooked to medium-rare (4 to 5 minutes per side), cooking on all 4 sides, about 16 to 20 minutes in all. Baste often with the reserved marinade. (The internal temperature, when read on an instant-read meat thermometer, should be about 145 degrees for medium-rare.) If flare-ups occur, move the meat to the cooler part of the grill.

Transfer the meat to a platter or cutting board; let rest 3 minutes before carving and serving.

MONKEY GLAND SAUCE

Makes 1-1/4 cups

1 cup fruit chutney
1 cup dry red wine
2 tablespoons salted butter
1 teaspoon Tabasco or your favorite hot sauce
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon liquid smoke
Coarse salt

Combine all the ingredients in a heavy nonreactive saucepan over medium-high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer until the chutney dissolves, stirring often, 5 to 10 minutes. For a chunky sauce, serve as is. For a smooth sauce, puree in a food processor or blender. Use right away or transfer to a jar, cover, and refrigerate.

WILD MUSHROOM MIXED GRILL ON GRILLED BREAD

Source: How to Grill pg. 375; bread on pg. 420

Method: Direct

Serves: 4

1 pound mixed mushrooms (preferably exotic mushrooms, including shiitakes, morels, oyster mushrooms, hedgehog mushrooms, lobster mushrooms, and the like)

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 cloves garlic, minced

Coarse salt and black pepper

Three plum tomatoes, grilled (see page 393), seeded, and diced

1 medium onion, quartered, grilled (see page 380), and diced

2 jalapeno peppers, or more to taste, grilled, sliced crosswise, and seeded (for a hotter mixed grill, leave the seeds in)

2 tablespoons chopped cilantro, plus small sprigs for garnish

2 tablespoons lime juice

Thin lime slices, for garnish

You'll also need:

Grill wok or skillet, or 10 to 12 bamboo skewers; 1 cup wood chips (preferably oak), unsoaked; spray oil (optional)

Set up the grill for direct grilling and preheat to high. If using a gas grill, place the wood chips in the smoker box or in a smoker pouch and preheat until you see smoke.

Using a damp paper towel, wipe the mushrooms clean. Trim the mushrooms and cut any large ones in half or quarters, so that all are roughly the same size. When ready to cook, if using a charcoal grill, toss the wood chips on the coals.

“Stir-grill” method: Place the grill wok on the grill to preheat. When ready to cook, lightly spray the wok with oil, removing it from the grill when you do so. Toss the mushrooms with the oil and add them to the wok. Grill until the mushrooms are nicely browned, 6 to 10 minutes, shaking the wok and stirring the mushrooms with tongs to ensure even grilling. Generously season with salt and pepper.

“Skewer” method: Skewer the mushrooms, taking care not to break the caps. When ready to cook, brush one side of the mushrooms with oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill the mushrooms 3 to 5 minutes per side, basting with oil before and after turning; when done, the mushrooms will be browned and tender, 6 to 10 minutes in all.

Transfer the grilled mushrooms to a large bowl (unskewer if necessary). Stir in the garlic, tomatoes, onion, jalapenos, chopped cilantro, and lime juice. Add salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with the lime slices and cilantro sprigs and serve at once.

Sub-Recipe:
GRILLED GARLIC PARSLEY CHEESE BREAD

1 loaf French bread (20 to 24 inches long)
12 tablespoons (1-1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Cut the bread sharply on the diagonal into 1/2-inch thick slices. Arrange the slices on a baking sheet.

Place the butter, garlic, cheese, parsley, and salt and pepper in a bowl and beat to mix. Using a spatula, spread the garlic butter on both sides of the bread. The recipe can be prepared ahead to this stage.

Set up your grill for direct grilling and preheat to medium-high. Have one portion of the grill unlit, where you can move the bread if it starts to burn.

Grill the bread until a deep golden brown on both sides, 1 to 3 minutes per side. Don't take your eyes off the grill for a second, as the bread will burn quickly. Serve it hot off the grill.

SMOKE-ROASTED WILD FRUIT CRUMBLE

Source: Adapted from BBQ USA by Steven Raichlen (Workman Publishing, 2003)

Method: Indirect grilling

Serves: 6-8

2 pints fresh raspberries, picked over
1 large ripe pear (Asian or Bartlett), peeled, cored, and diced
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/2 cup coarsely crumbled biscotti or gingersnap cookie crumbs
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into 1-inch pieces
Pinch of salt
Vanilla ice cream (optional), for serving

You'll also need:

One 8-by-10-inch aluminum disposable foil pan; cooking oil spray;
1 cup wood chips or chunks (preferably apple), soaked for 1 hour in water to cover, then drained

Pick through the raspberries, removing any stems, leaves, or bruised berries. Mrs. Raichlen would rinse and drain them—I don't bother. Place the berries and the diced pear in a large nonreactive mixing bowl. Drizzle with the lemon juice and stir gently. Add 1/4 cup of the flour and the granulated sugar, and the lemon zest and gently toss to mix. Lightly spray the aluminum foil pan with cooking spray. Spoon the raspberry-pear mixture into the aluminum foil pan.

Place the biscotti crumbs, brown sugar, and the remaining 1/2 cup of flour in a food processor fitted with the metal blade and process until a coarse powder forms. Add the butter and salt, then pulse until the mixture is coarse and crumbly. Spoon the topping over the filling.

Set up the grill for indirect grilling and preheat to medium-high. If using a gas grill, place all of the wood chips or chunks in the smoker box or in a smoker pouch and run the grill on high until you see smoke, then reduce the heat to medium-high. If using a charcoal grill, preheat it to medium-high, then toss all of the wood chips or chunks on the coals.

When ready to cook, place the pan with the filling in the center of the hot grate, away from the heat, and cover the grill. Cook the crumble until the filling is bubbling and the topping is browned, about 40 minutes. Serve the crumble hot or warm, ideally with vanilla ice cream.

Variation: For an outrageously delicious twist on this crumble, replace the raspberries and pear with blueberries and peaches. (Raspberries and peaches are good together, too.)

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