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y| rarity. Here's how to make 4 BY KEITH
DRESSER

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Few coo methods can beat roasting

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Roasting Meat 101]

A properly cooked roast is

simple and satisfying, It is also a a great roast
every time.

is that most roasts are dry, bland, and work for
another. Years of roasting co niques for producing
superior results,

Cc HOOSING THE RIGHT CUT AND THE
RIGHT METHOD

Choosing a roast can be a confusing endeavor,
and

once you ve made a selection it's important to use
the

right roasting method. We've developed two
Catego- nies of roasting that work best for dif-
ferent kinds and

list of our favorite cuts of beef, pork, and lamb,
along with the best way to roast them,

ROASTING METHOD

Fast and High. «2 soy ao

Though lower oven temperatures generally
guaran-

tee more evenly cooked meat, small, narrow
roasts

like beef tenderloin and rack of lamb depend ona

relatively quick cooking time to ensure juicy, ten-
der

___/meat. Roast these cuts at an oven temperature
of 450 degrees.

| Favorite Cuts:

— high price tag. It

BEEF Tenderloin

The most tender cut of beef money can buy, but
the flavor is mild.

Top Sirloin Roast As flavorful and juicy

(though not as tender) as a rib roast at a frac- tion
of the cost.

LAMB

Rack of Lamb Ti, extreme tenderness of this mild-
tasting cut commands a

usually contains eight or nine ribs, depending on
how the meat has been butchered.

Cuts of meat: fast and high and slow and low.
Here is a

king for eas casting bulide ich eee ig €—the process
Is largely unattended, And when done right, Vor
and yields a tender, Juicy texture in meat. But
the unfortunate reality sre And what works for
one cut of meat doesn't necessarily untess Cuts of
meat in the test kitchen have taught us the best
tech-

ROASTING METHOD

Slow andl qw-aiticie Hestt ise

Heat takes a long time to penetrate into the center
of large cuts of meat such as prime rib, leg of lamb,
and rack of pork, making them susceptible to a
thick Outer swath of gray, overcooked meat. To
prevent this problem, roast large cuts slowly at
250 degrees for beef and 325 degrees for pork.

Favorite Cuts: BEEF

Rib Roast,

First Cut

The standard for roast beef. This cut is extremely
tender and flavorful, albeit on the expensive side.

PORK

Boneless Blade Roast

The most flavorful

cut from the loin, with a fair amount of fat that allows it to remain juicy when roasted.

Center Rib Roast Though not as juicy

as a blade roast, this lean roast is flavorful and widely available.

LAMB

Leg of Lamb This cut is not as tender as the rack, but it boasts fuller flavor. It may be sold with the bones in but is more commonly found butterflied and boneless, making preparation easier.

Roasting: Essential Equipment Although roasting requires very few pieces of equipment, we've learned that these items are essential.

INSTANT-READ THERMOMETER An instant-read thermometer is by far the best way to gauge when a roast is done. We prefer digital to dial-face models for their speed, accuracy, and ease of reading.

TEST KITCHEN WINNER: » THERMOWORKS Super-Fast Thermopen \$85.3

BEST BUY: @ CDN ProAccurate DTQ450 \$17.95

ROASTING PAN Size and construction are the most important factors to consider when selecting a roasting pan. Because we often sear meat before we roast it, we like a flameproof pan that can be used on the stovetop. We avoid pans with nonstick finishes, because they can't handle high oven temperatures. The perfect pan should accommodate a big holiday turkey with ease, so 15 by 11 inches is our preferred size.

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TEST KITCHEN WINNER: = CALPHALON Contemporary Roasting Pan \$99.99 (comes with roasting rack) ROASTING RACK A rack elevates the roast above drippings and grease, preventing the meat's exterior from becoming fatty and soggy. It also allows for rotation of the meat and air circulation around the roast, ensuring even cooking. We prefer a sturdy-handled V-shaped rack that holds

a roast snugly in place and can be TEST KITCHEN WINNER: easily removed > ALL-CLAD Non-Stick from the pan. Roasting Rack \$24.95

COOK'S ILLUSTRATED

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5 STEPS TO A GREAT ROAST : = aie

Beef, pork, and lamb roasts come in a variety of shapes and sizes that can make it challenging to use well-browned, flavorful, evenly cooked meat. Follow these tips to ensure success.

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1. Season and let stand Sprinkle the exterior of the roast with salt (preferably kosher) and let it stand at room temperature for at least an hour. As the roast sits, the salt draws out its juices, which then combine with the

fat before being reabsorbed into the meat. The result: a roast that is flavorful both inside and out.

2. Tie before cooking Tying a roast forces it into a more even shape, ensuring that the narrow ends won't overcook before the thick middle part is done. Tying also makes for a nicer presentation and easier slicing.

3. Sear before roasting Searing produces new flavor compounds that are

the success of a roast. But blasting the oven

to create a crust, sear the roast in 1–2 tablespoons of oil for two minutes per side, either in the roasting pan or a skillet, then transfer it to the oven.

1. Choose appropriate roasting method per call for cooking roasts in a moderately hot (350–400°F) oven, but this method can lead to an overcooked exterior and unevenly cooked interior. Depending on the meat's size and whether to roast at temperatures as high as 450 degrees Fahrenheit. (See "Choosing the Right Cut and the

if

Let meat rest

It should rest under a foil tent for 10 to 20 minutes before the protein molecules in the meat cool, they will accumulate juices and redistribute them throughout.

Outdoor Roasting on the Grill isn't your only option for roasting meat. For tender cuts that don't require slow cooking over low heat, such as beef tenderloin, the grill works just as

vell. Grill-roasting relies on indirect heat between 300 and 400 degrees (in contrast to true grilling, which occurs at temperatures in excess of 500 degrees). Coals are piled on one side of the grill, and meat roasts on the “cool” side, with the lid kept down to trap heat and create an environment much like the oven. With a gas grill, the primary burner is kept on and the others are turned off.

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SECRETS TO SUCCESS

1. Season, let meat stand 1 hour, and tie before grill-roasting (see steps 1 and 2 in “5 Steps to a Great Roast,” above). For Jean cuts of pork, skip the salt and brine the meat before placing it on the grill.

2. Use wood chunks or chips to enhance smoky flavor While charcoal will impart some flavor to the meat, wood chunks or chips are necessary to achieve true smokiness (especially with a gas grill). Place soaked, drained chunks directly on charcoal; wrap wood chips in a foil packet poked with holes (or place in a foil tray for a gas grill). To keep the fire burning as long as possible, we also prefer to use briquettes rather than hardwood charcoal,

When Is It Done? a A thermometer takes the guesswork out of knowing

when a roast is done. To ensure that the probe is in the roast, insert the thermometer at an angle. To get an accurate reading, push the probe deep into the roast and then slowly draw it out until you locate the center of the meat (indicated by the lowest temperature). Avoid bones and pan surfaces. And take more than one reading.

The ideal serving temperatures for optimal flavor and juiciness are listed below. If food safety is your primary concern, cook all meat until well-done. Note: The meat should come off the heat 5 to 10 degrees below the desired final temperature, as the internal temperature will continue to rise as the meat rests.

TEMPERATURE

MEDIUM- WELL- done RARE RARE MEDIUM
 DONE Beef | 125 | 130 140 160 Lamb | 125 | 130
 : 140. | **160 Pork** | * | # iso. | ~160

- Not recommended

3. Bank coals on one side of grill

Many recipes recommend banking coals on both sides of the grill. We find the edges of large roasts can burn with this method. We prefer to transfer all coals to one side of the grill, leaving half of the grill free of coals so meat can cook without danger of burning. To ensure even cooking, it is a good idea to rotate the meat half-way through cooking.

4. Use vents to regulate heat To help regulate heat, adjust vents on both the lid and grill bottom. We prefer:

close vents partially to keep the coals from burning up too fast and to allow the grill retain heat. I

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