

Title:

Choosing The Right Meat

Word Count:

497

Summary:

To a person that does not commonly purchase meat, the deli counter can be a very intimidating place to be. There are so many selections to choose from when you are trying to find red meat, and many people don't know where to look when it comes to purchasing good cuts of meat. In this article, we'll discuss some of the common features of steaks to look for when purchasing beef so that you can know how to choose the right cuts for you and your family.

First off, you need to ...

Keywords:

Meat, food, buying beef

Article Body:

To a person that does not commonly purchase meat, the deli counter can be a very intimidating place to be. There are so many selections to choose from when you are trying to find red meat, and many people don't know where to look when it comes to purchasing good cuts of meat. In this article, we'll discuss some of the common features of steaks to look for when purchasing beef so that you can know how to choose the right cuts for you and your family.

First off, you need to understand the USDA's grading system when it comes to steak. There are three grades of beef sold under the USDA guidelines - Prime, Choice, and Select. Prime is the most expensive cut of beef, and it is usually from younger cows and features extensive marbling. Marbling is an aspect of beef that is important to understand. When small levels of fat permeate through the meat, causing it to have a 'marbled' appearance like the stone of the same name, the beef is often very tender and consequently highly desired. It can be tough to find Prime USDA beef outside of restaurants, with only specialty butchers usually carrying the meat. The next step down in the quality of beef is Choice. Choice beef is the most commonly found grade in the marketplace, and while it has less marbling than Prime beef, it still tends to be desirable. Select is the lowest grade of beef, featuring limited marbling throughout the beef, usually resulting in tough meat that isn't very juicy.

Another important aspect to consider when buying beef is the cut. One of the

most commonly purchased high-end steak cuts is known as filet mignon. Also commonly referred to as beef tenderloin, these cuts are amongst the tenderest cuts of beef available. They are often round in appearance, and you can expect to pay a pretty penny when purchasing filet mignon. New York Strip Steaks are also often desirable, featuring a long marbled cut of meat with a strip of fat along the side. T-Bones and Porterhouses represent the bigger cuts of steak, with 20 ounces being a common size for the Porterhouse. They feature a bone along the center with plenty of marbled, tender meat throughout.

When choosing an individual steak, there are some things to look out for. Purchase beef that is bright red in color, signifying a level of freshness not found in most steaks. The package that the steak comes in should be cold, and there shouldn't be much juice floating around the package - that denotes that the meat may have been on the shelf for too long of a time. The meat should be firm to the touch, with soft meat possibly being on the shelf too long as well.

Now that you know what to look for when shopping for a steak, you can more accurately pick the cut of meat and the choice steaks to keep you and your dinner guests pleased.