

Following The Rules Is Key To Charcoal Tailgating Victory

(NAPSA)—Serious tailgaters are just as passionate about their parking lot buffets as they are about the game. And for a majority of tailgaters, only a charcoal grill will do when it comes to cooking the feast. In fact, according to the recent Weber Tailgating Study, 61 percent of tailgaters who bring grills with them opt for a charcoal grill when prepping for the “big game.”

“Cooking a pregame spread over charcoal is a major matter of pride for a lot of us,” says Chef Jamie Purviance, a renowned grilling expert and author of the new “Weber’s Charcoal Grilling” cookbook. “The fickleness of a live fire requires more skills than a gas grill does, but once you’ve learned to control it, the rewards are huge, both in terms of taste and a sense of accomplishment.”

Rookie grillers sometimes let their excitement get ahead of them, jumping in like a young quarterback off the bench for the first time—and fumbling. One surefire way to avoid similar problems is to read the playbook on the top five grilling mistakes that always draw a penalty flag:

Flag: False Start

Thrown when: Lighter fluid is used to start the fire.

The Right Call: Chemical starters are dangerous and leave behind a nasty taste, so don’t look their way for your start-up. Instead, place crumpled newspaper or paraffin cubes on the grate, cover with a pyramid of charcoal briquettes, and ignite. When your charcoal is coated with light grey ash (usually about 20 minutes after it’s lit), you’re ready to cook. A chimney starter makes this process easy.

Flag: Unnecessary Roughness

Thrown when: A spatula is used to press the burger against the cooking grate.

The Right Call: Squeezing only pushes out flavor. Let your meat cook until it separates cleanly from the grate (a light coating of



Pepper Steak Tacos with Pico de Gallo will spice up your next tailgate party.

oil will help it brown evenly and prevent sticking). Then flip—once. That’s all most foods need.

Flag: Illegal Procedure

Thrown when: The grill lid is open while you cook.

The Right Call: Keep the lid down to cook your food faster and more evenly. This also reduces the chances of a flare-up.

Flag: Delay Of Game

Thrown when: You don’t have the right equipment.

The Right Call: Missing gear can make you miss kickoff, so be prepared with this list: aluminum pans, paper plates and cups, tongs, spatulas, mitts, cutting boards, ice, condiments, seasonings, trash bags—and, of course, charcoal, a chimney starter and a grill.

Flag: Holding

Thrown when: Hot coals and ashes are not safely disposed of after grilling.

The Right Call: Always wait until coals have completely cooled before disposing in a fireproof trash bin or ash can. If you empty ashes every time you grill, you’ll get better air flow when starting your next fire. Plus, ashes absorb moisture, which may cause your grill to rust.

For tips and tailgating recipes, visit www.weber.com/tailgating.

porate the flavors, let the salsa sit at room temperature for 1 hour.

2. Using a mortar and pestle or spice mill, crush the peppercorns and the cumin seed. Place in a small bowl and mix with the remaining rub ingredients.

3. Fill a Weber RapidFire Chimney Starter to the rim with mesquite charcoal and burn the charcoal until it is lightly covered with ash. Spread the charcoal in a tightly packed, single layer across one-half of the charcoal grate. Put the cooking grate in place, close the lid, and pre-heat the grill for 10 minutes. Leave all the vents open.

4. Cut the skirt steak into 2 or 3 sections so they fit on the grill. Lightly coat each of the steaks with oil. Season them evenly with the rub. Let the steaks sit at room temperature for 20 to 30 minutes before grilling. Stack 6 tortillas on top of each other and wrap them in aluminum foil. Repeat with the remaining 6 tortillas.

5. Brush the cooking grate clean. Grill the steaks over *direct high heat*, with the lid closed as much as possible, until lightly charred on the surface and cooked to your desired doneness, 5 to 7 minutes for medium rare, turning once or twice and swapping their positions as needed for even cooking. At the same time, warm the 2 packets of tortillas over *indirect high heat* for 4 to 6 minutes, turning once. Remove the steaks and tortillas from the grill and let the steaks rest for 2 to 3 minutes (keep the tortillas warm in the foil). Cut the meat across the grain into thin slices. Pile the meat inside warm tortillas and top with the salsa, draining the juices back into the bowl so the tortillas don’t get too wet. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings.

Pepper Steak Tacos with Pico de Gallo

Prep time: 15 minutes

Grilling time: 5 to 7 minutes

Salsa

- 2 cups seeded, finely diced ripe tomato
- 1 cup ¼-inch-diced red onion
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 teaspoon minced serrano chile
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

Rub

- 1½ teaspoons whole black peppercorns
- 1½ teaspoons cumin seed
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon pure chile powder
- ¼ teaspoon granulated garlic
- 1½ pounds skirt steak, about ½ inch thick, trimmed of excess surface fat
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 12 corn or flour tortillas (6 to 8 inches)

1. In a medium bowl combine the salsa ingredients. Mix well. If desired, to fully incor-