

Cooking in great outdoors gives food an added zest

(Con't. From Page 16) or by slow smoke cooking.

As a general rule, if you are cooking on the grid, first sear the meat quickly to seal in the juices. Then continue grilling with the cover of the grill either up or down depending on your preference. There is more concentrating heat and smoke when the cover is closed.

If it's a roast or poultry that you're preparing, the rotisserie is the logical choice. Insert the spit through the center of the meat or poultry. Check the balancing by cradling the ends of the spit in your hands and rotating. Unless the food is balanced, it won't cook evenly. Remove the cooking grid, and place a drip tray of heavy foil directly under the food.

Smoke cooking is slow cooking over a low flame with the grill cover closed. The food is usually cooked in an aluminum foil "boat." Excess fat should be drained off and a small amount of water added to the boat occasionally.

GENERAL HINTS

To add to your ease and success as an outdoor gourmet cook, keep these hints in mind: Un-



Even fish can be cooked on an outdoor grill.

less the food is extremely perishable, bring it to room temperature before barbecuing. Trim off most of the excess fat, and slash remaining fat every few inches.

If you are preparing a large cut of meat, use a meat thermometer to achieve just the right degree of doneness. Use tongs or spatulas instead of forks for turning meats to avoid puncturing the surface which allows juices to escape. If food gets too dark before it's done, slip foil under it. Wrap protruding bones or fragile parts in foil to protect them from burning.

"Outdoorsy" FLAVOR

For a subtle "outdoorsy" flavor, soak hickory chips or small twigs from wild cherry or sugar maple overnight in water. Wrap the chips or twigs in foil, punch holes in it, and place it directly on the briquettes. Or, add the chips directly to the briquettes just before the food is done. For a deep, smoke flavor, add the chips or twigs when you start cooking.

Careful seasoning can add a special flair to your outdoor cooking. If a garlic flavor is desired, throw several cloves on the hot briquettes. Bastes and marinades made with acid (vinegar, wine, citrus juice) act as a tenderizer. Those which contain "fats," such as salad oil or melted butter, add moisture to very lean foods. To keep food from drying out, bastes should contain some "fat."

Bastes which contain sugar should be applied during the last few minutes — otherwise the surface of the food will become charred. Salt seasoning should be added after the food is cooked to prevent the juices from running.

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