



by chef scotty wagner

SWEET HEAT A FRIEND INDEED

We're not talking about your hot glorified nakedness fully exposed to the sun's rays. We're not talking about coconut oil being brushed up and back down your spine repeatedly; No, no, no! Knock down a Corona (squirt of lime please?) and sit tight, maybe even cross your legs. This sweet quench can only be attributed to the erotic sensation of smokey, sweet barbecue! Summertime is here, and it's really all about the grill (let's hear it for my baby, let's hear it for my man, aaan, aaan; maybe he's no Romeo but he's my... sorry, musically sidetracked for a moment).

We should all take note that we live in an area of the country, where you need not adorn a stocking or gloves to tackle the Weber. Nope, for 252 days you can pretty much spark up your impulsively purchased Homo-Depot propane grille (Get back to basics folks—charcoal!!!!) and slap on any given slab of meat (no pun intended). Grilling is fun, easy, quick and healthy... so let's prep you with appropriate weapons and get to the grub!

HOW TO TREAT YOUR MEAT:

1) Rubs: They add flavor, contain sugar to help caramelize the "protein" and are traditionally pre-salted (ie: ready to go). You can make your own—or—purchase one of millions available. Montreal Steak Blend is a great middle of the road variation for most practical purposes.

2) Marinades: Fat plus acid (ex: olive oil plus red wine or vinegar) both coats and integrates with your selected victim. Add any spices, herbs, chopped garlic, ginger—anything—but make damn certain you don't do it the night before—30 minutes to one hour maximum.



A MEDITERRANEAN EAT AL FRESCO FOR SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN THE PARK

CASABLANCA LAMB SKEWERS

- 1 1/2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp red wine vinegar
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- 1 1/2 Tbsp Garam Masala (Indian spice blend – BUY IT, you won't regret it!)
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 1/3 to 1 1/2 pounds lamb shoulder arm (round-bone) chops, trimmed boned, cut into 1-inch pieces (beef, pork or chicken will work just fine—but give Bambi's cousin a try)
- 4 bamboo skewers, soaked in water 10 minutes
- 1 package of pita bread

PREPARATION

Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Whisk first five ingredients in medium bowl to blend. Add lamb; toss to coat evenly and let stand 15 minutes. Thread lamb on skewers, leaving 1/2-inch space between each piece.

Grill or broil until crusty brown outside but still pink inside, turning occasionally, about eight minutes. Flash the pita bread over an open gas burner just until the edges start to burn, then cut into triangles and wrap in aluminum foil.

EXTRA TO COMPLETE YOUR MEDITERRANEAN FÊTE:

- Tabouleh (cous-cous salad)
- Dolmas (stuffed grape leaves)
- Feta cheese
- Hummus (garbanzo bean dip)
- Baba ghanoush (eggplant dip)

Arrange skewers on one large platter (to share) with any selection of the extra items mentioned above, all available for purchase in Mediterranean or Kosher grocery markets—the difference will be near to homemade versus mass-produced/poor flavored imitations of large grocery chains!

For more recipes and all things Chef Scotty, follow his blog at: chefscotty.com.

