

## **We're cooking with Gas!**

In our family, grilling is a religion. Seriously, I once even wrote a poem about grilling. We grill about 4 nights out of 7 all year round. So, when our 15-year old grill, having been rebuilt once, finally just rusted through – it was time for some big changes – and fast. Fast forward: Doug got a new grill! Props to the guys at Dresler's who had the fabulous Weber floor model and gave us great advice and a good deal!

One of our favorite recipes is Steak au Poivre. The heat of the pepper, the depth of the cognac – they all go together with a big thick steak and say those three little words we long to hear “big California Cabernet.”

Steak au Poivre on the grill? You're right, that's not exactly find French cooking but, this is America dammit and we'll grill if we want to. So, celebrate the cooler air with a great steak dinner – enjoy.

### **Steak au Poivre**

#### **First – Prep the Steak:**

¼ Cup cracked pepper\*

Salt to taste

4 great steaks – preferably bone-in rib eyes.

Steaks should be out of the refrigerator for a bit already. Mix 2 Tablespoons of Kosher or other salt with the ¼ Cup of pepper. Divide into 2 portions and then distribute 1 half evenly among the steaks, spreading it out and pressing in so the mixture will adhere to the steak. Turn them over and repeat so both sides have pressed in salt and pepper. Use good quality salt – grey salt is amazing, at a minimum use kosher salt. (Frankly, always use kosher salt – lower sodium, lower aluminum and much better taste)

\*You can use a mix or red, green, white, black peppercorns – or just use black. Do not just put these through your pepper mill they'll be too fine. Use a grinder simply put them in a baggie, cover w/ wax paper or a towel and then crush with something heavy – I use a meat pounder.

#### **Next – Make the Sauce:**

If you're tag-teaming you can do sauce and steak concurrently but at our house grill time is also stand-around-and-swirl-your-glass time so really prep-work is best done ahead. You can make this sauce up to 2 days ahead and refrigerate.

A Tblspn of butter  
2 Tblspns shallots (chopped)  
½ cup Cognac  
¾ cups cream (heavy)  
¼ cup chopped flat (Italian) parsley  
Salt to taste

Melt the butter over low heat, add the shallots and sauté 5 minutes (until soft). Add the Cognac and increase the heat to let the alcohol burn off. The Cognac may flame – don't worry – it will only last a minute. Let the cognac almost completely evaporate, add the cream and stir over medium low until the sauce thickens. Taste, add just a bit of salt if necessary, add the parsley.  
Let it cool and then just warm it a bit as you serve.

### **Last – Grill the Meat:**

Heat the grill and cook to your liking. I actually like my steak almost Medium with this recipe, unlike my usual medium-rare. When it's too rare the juice competes w/ the cream sauce a bit but – whatever you like. However, you should still sear the meat at high temperature (about 2 minutes per side) to lock in the juices and the flavor of the meat.

This is a special treat and you can keep the sides simple: steamed asparagus or broccoli is a winner, mashed potatoes (with or without horseradish) and that's it.

Oh, and some wine...