

MUTTON DRESSED AS LAMB

Intramuscular fats as shown below is one of the keys to a great barbecue



When choosing cuts of meat for low 'n' slow barbecue marbling or intramuscular (striation) fats are key to achieving a great result. Simply put "fat is flavour" and when rendered down on a barbecue with just the right amount of heat and smoke, it also provides for moistness, tenderness and an appealing "mouth feel" with each bite.

For this reason, I use bone-out mutton (sheep older than 2 years) leg when barbecuing "lamb" for our restaurant. Mutton takes on plenty of smokey goodness, stays tender and is a very popular alternative to pork and beef with our guests.

LET'S GET STUCK IN TO SOME BAA-BAA-QUE!

Time: 4 hours

Difficulty: Medium

INGREDIENTS:

- 2.5kg Bone-Out Mutton Leg
- Rum & Que Ram Rod Rub
- Rum & Que Meat Juice (all-purpose bbq sauce)
- 50g Butter
- 1/2 cup of Coke Zero or beer of choice

METHOD:

1. Trim away all hard fats and silver skin to expose the meat.
2. Apply an even coating of Ram Rod rub & put aside to "sweat" for 30mins.
3. With lit coal briquettes set your barbecue-smoker up for indirect cooking (if unsure what indirect cooking entails a google search including your barbecue type will help). I am aiming to have the barbecue somewhere around 175°C-200°C (350°F-400°F).
4. Add some smoking wood of choice - I like Pohutukawa when paired with mutton, but any of the fruit woods are also banging. The goal is to achieve gentle clean white smoke.
5. Once your barbecue is up to temperature, place the mutton indirect onto the grill and close the lid.
6. After 2 hours check the internal temperature of the mutton with an instant read thermometer - it should be probing on average around 70°C (160°F) and the bark (rub) should be set.
7. Once happy with the internal temperature and look of the mutton, transfer to a quality foil tray with the coke, bbq sauce and butter. Cover tightly with tinfoil (Ultimate Tinfoil is the best).

8. At this stage you can either return to the barbecue or because it is now "wrapped", there is no reason you can't use your electric oven to finish the process as no more smokey flavours will be added. When using the oven I set it to 200°C (400°F).

9. After 1 hour, again check the internal temperature of the mutton - you are searching for 99°C (210°F). You may need a little longer but ideal temps should be reached within 1.5 hours.

10. Remove from the barbecue or oven, leaving covered, rest for at least 30mins on the bench or longer if using an insulated food box or chilly bin.

11. Retaining the juices in the tray, place the mutton onto a chopping board and with a sharp knife slice to desired thicknesses!

12. Dredge the slices back thru the juices in the tray and serve with your favourite sides.

And that is it...a tender & tasty baa-baa-que option that will be sure to please.

TILL NEXT TIME, HAVE A GREAT XMAS PERIOD, STAY SAFE AND GET THE COALS GLOWIN'