

**Newsweek**

Food: It's Smokin'

Newsweek

Aug. 6, 2007 issue - For an alternative to flipping burgers on the grill this summer, take a cue from down-home Southern barbecue: try smoking. This technique differs from grilling in that meats are cooked at significantly lower temperatures (under 300 degrees for meats, under 100 degrees for fish and cheese) for up to 24 hours, which concentrates flavor and tenderizes meat. According to Cheryl and Bill Jamison, authors of the "Smoke & Spice" cookbook (*Harvard Common Press*. \$16.95), the fattiest (and least expensive) cuts become most flavorful.

Smoking aficionados cook with chunks of wood like apple or hickory (\$15 for 10 lb.; cookshack.com). The easiest smokers to use are electric, which maintain an even heat and don't require a constant watch to add more wood. Cookshack also sells a great smoker (\$500), though it's a bit smaller than Williams-Sonoma's Smokin' Tex (\$500; williams-sonoma.com), which has four racks to cook several meats at once.

If you forgo the smoker, try a SAVU Smoker Bag (\$3.50 each; bigacres.com), a single-use foil sack laced with alder or hickory chips, or cedar grilling planks (\$7.99; fireandflavor.com) or papers (\$9.99 for four). Just toss these atop an outdoor grill to get a hint of smoky taste.

As for sauce, nothing comes close to Cookshack's tangy and authentic Barbecue Sauce (\$2.50), while one of the best rubs is Williams-Sonoma's Memphis-style Rib Rub (\$9). Now you can call yourself a smoker and your friends might think you're cool.

—Tara Weingarten

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