

# How To ... Use Smoke To Flavor Your Foods



The truest form of barbecue is cooking over an open fire like the cavemen. This method of cooking is tedious, slow and allows the smoke to penetrate and flavor the meat.

Today there are many options for adding smoke flavor to your foods. Most people would agree that the open pit method is the best, but this also involves the most work. Conventional methods of "smoking" foods achieve the result without all the work.

The quickest way to add smoke flavor is to add a liquid smoke type product to your recipes. These products do not add a true smoke flavor to foods and are not good for you on a consistent basis. We only recommend this for adding smoke flavor to sauces.

Your gas grill can be used in a limited capacity to smoke grilling meats. Some grills have a smoke trough that can be loaded with wood chips, chunks, or pellets. If your grill does not have a trough, you can either buy a smoking box or make your own foil pouch for the wood chips or pellets. Typically, these types of grills have hoods that need to be closed when using the smoker option. The problem with this concept is that grills cook meats too quickly. The art of smoking is cooking the meat at low temperature for a long period. The two concepts do not mesh. The grilled meat will be done too quickly and will not have the smoke flavor that you are seeking.

Dedicated smokers, such as the ones featured in our website cook at low temperatures and keep the smoke in the chamber for the appropriate amount of time. This allows the cheaper cuts of meat to become tender and the smoke flavor to permeate the food. We recommend this method because it creates the most authentic flavor, takes the least amount of time, and is not hazardous like the liquid flavorings.

Regardless of the method that you choose to smoke your food, we recommend using 100% natural wood pellets as the smoke source. There is no prep work involved in using pellets. They can be added directly to charcoal fires, used in grill smoking troughs, or in charcoal/water and electric smokers. The smoke from pellets (made from compressed sawdust) is milder and will last longer than wood chips or chunks. The result is a more consistently smoked product. We offer five varieties of these pellets and sample packs for your experimentation. They can be found in the smoker section of our website.

A great source of information for everything "smoking" related is the "Smoked Foods Cookbook" written by our friends at Cookshack. This cookbook offers many tips, suggestions for what type of wood to use with which type of meat, and over 190 recipes. This cookbook is included with some smoker models that we offer, or is available for only \$16.00 on our website.

