Pan Seared Steak

* *Cook Time:* 6 mins

INGREDIENTS

* 1 bone-in or boneless rib eye steak or sirloin steak at least 1 ½ pounds, cut to at least 1 ½ inches thick
* Pinch of salt
* Freshly ground black pepper
* 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
* 3 tablespoons butter
* 2 peeled garlic cloves, left whole
* Few sprigs fresh parsley, including stems
* Optional: Wine and stock (chicken, beef, veal,etc.) and butter for deglazing the pan and making a delicious pan sauce
* Optional: Roasted potato wedges (see note above)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Salt and pepper one side of the steak.
2. Heat your seasoned cast iron skillet to smoking hot. Add oil and swirl around to coat. Add steak seasoned-side down (place it in pan away from you so you don’t get splattered), and then salt and pepper the other side of the steak. At this point do not touch it for two minutes. Using tongs (never pierce the meat with a fork), flip the steak and add butter, garlic and parsley to the pan next to the steak. Allow the steak to cook for 2 more minutes.
3. Right after you flip the steak for the first time, with a spoon or small ladle, keep basting the melted butter over the steak. Baste continually for the full two minutes (tilt pan a little if you have to, to get the butter onto the spoon).
4. After two minutes on each side, keep flipping and basting the steak each time leaving the steak for 30 seconds before turning. Test the steak with the poke test (see note below) and remove at medium rare at about the five to six minute mark of total cooking time. Cook a minute or two longer for medium to well. A thicker steak (such as a sirloin) may take longer.
5. Turn off the heat and baste one more time. Leave the steak in the pan loosely covered with foil for 10 minutes and allow to rest before cutting. Baste one more time, and remove to a cutting board. Either cut the steak in half for each serving or for a nicer presentation, slice on the bias and serve slices.
6. Discard the pan drippings or if desired, deglaze the pan with a little wine, then and stock and simmer for a few minutes to reduce the drippings. Add a tablespoon or two of butter to thicken for a nice pan sauce .

NOTES

Note: To test the meat for doneness, we use what is called the ‘poke test’. Make a tight fist and feel the flesh just below your thumb into the palm of your hand. Firm is how well-done steak will feel. Loosen your grip a bit and feel the same spot. That will be medium-rare. Loosen your grip all the way and that is blood-rare. Now poke your finger into the thickest part of the meat and compare it to your palm for the perfect level of doneness that you desire

Basic Mashed Potatoes

Ingredients

* 2 pounds baking potatoes, peeled and quartered
* 2 tablespoons butter
* 1 cup milk
* salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add potatoes and cook until tender but still firm, about 15 minutes; drain.
2. In a small saucepan heat butter and milk over low heat until butter is melted. Using a potato masher or electric beater, slowly blend milk mixture into potatoes until smooth and creamy. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

NOTE:

Feel free to add other seasonings like cheese, bacon, chives, garlic etc. to be creative.

Roasted Brussels Sprouts With Garlic

INGREDIENTS

* **1** **pint brussels sprouts (about a pound)**
* **4 to 6** **tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, to coat bottom of pan**
* **5** **cloves garlic, peeled**
* **Salt and pepper to taste**
* **1** **tablespoon balsamic vinegar**

PREPARATION

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees. Trim bottom of brussels sprouts, and slice each in half top to bottom. Heat oil in cast-iron pan over medium-high heat until it shimmers; put sprouts cut side down in one layer in pan. Put in garlic, and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
2. Cook, undisturbed, until sprouts begin to brown on bottom, and transfer to oven. Roast, shaking pan every 5 minutes, until sprouts are quite brown and tender, about 10 to 20 minutes.
3. Taste, and add more salt and pepper if necessary. Stir in balsamic vinegar, and serve hot or warm.