

Big Green Egg®

# COOKING TIPS + TECHNIQUES

**PLANK  
COOKING  
BASICS**

*The Ultimate Cooking Experience®*

# Cooking with Planks

Creating Extraordinarily Flavorful Food on the Big Green Egg!



*Plank cooking traces its origins to a Native American food preserving method, whereby foods were cooked on a moist wood plank over an open fire. Today, the superior heat retention qualities of the Big Green Egg make this an easy and enjoyable indirect type of grilling which uses a moist, all natural “plank” of wood to infuse food with moisture and flavor, while protecting the food from direct heat.*

Cooking on wood planks is a favorite of Big Green Egg fans around the world, as it adds a subtle smoky or woody flavor to all of your favorite recipes, and provides a fun way to serve the cooked food. You’ll enjoy getting acquainted with all the wood flavors — discovering which ones impart a stronger flavor and work well with more distinctive cuts of meats or poultry and fish, and which ones are best paired with milder meats, fish or vegetables. Salmon and grouper in particular are favorites of plank grillers, as are cuts such as pork loin and beef ... and even veggies and desserts!

The incredible smoky flavors of wood such as Western Red Cedar, Alder, Sugar Maple and Oak are infused into your favorite foods as you grill or bake – and just like our natural lump charcoal, there are no artificial or chemical additives of any kind to affect the subtle flavors. Big Green Egg Grilling Planks are made from all natural woods with nothing added. Unlike many other plank products, our planks are sourced from certified sustainable and food grade sources, and are select cut for optimum flavor. You will really enjoy the Ultimate Cooking Experience with our premium wood planks!

# The Plank

## Preparing the Plank.

Completely submerge the plank in water for an hour or so, placing something on the plank to keep it submerged. After 30 minutes, turn the plank so it gets soaked evenly and is more resistant to charring on the grill. For variations, try adding apple juice or wine to the soaking water — there will be a hint of flavor and the plank will just smell delicious.

## Seasoning the Plank.

Place the soaked plank on the cooking grid for several minutes. When the plank starts to smoke and pop, turn it over, then arrange the food in one layer on the charred side of the plank.

## Arranging the Food on the Plank.

As food makes contact with the surface of the plank it takes on the wood flavor, so spread out your food in such a way that the maximum surface of each piece of food is in contact with the wood. Use two planks, if necessary, so you don't crowd the food. Then close the dome of the EGG and cook as usual to the appropriate temperature. Always use a Big Green Egg food thermometer to check the internal temperature of food before serving.

## Cleaning the Plank

After you've cooked and served on the plank, clean it by lightly brushing off any particles and rinse with hot water. Do not soak the plank in soapy water or your next meal will taste like soap. Let the plank air dry in an open, ventilated area. A properly cared for plank will last more than one use. Repeat the soaking process each time it is used, and discard the plank when it begins to deteriorate from the heat.



Photo courtesy [www.nibblemethis.com](http://www.nibblemethis.com)



## Maple Planked Brie with Fruit Chutney

*A round of melting hot brie from the EGG, topped with a fruit chutney and served with crisp flatbread, makes an inviting appetizer.*

### • Ingredients

2 – ¼ lb. wheels of brie

1 jar homemade or purchased mango chutney

Suggested plank: 1 maple grilling plank, soaked in water for an hour  
Preheat the EGG for direct cooking without the convEGGtor at 400°F/204°C.

**Method:** With a sharp knife, gently slice off the top rind of brie to expose cheese. Spoon enough chutney on top of brie to cover the surface.

Place soaked plank on the cooking grid and close the dome. Heat for 3 minutes; using tongs, flip plank and place two wheels of brie 2 inches apart on heated side of plank. Grill with dome closed for 10-12 minutes or until cheese melts and begins to bubble. Remove plank and brie from grill. Top warm brie with desired amount of chutney and serve with crackers or fresh bread.

Recipe © Fire and Flavor Grilling Co.



### MANGO

Native to southeast Asia and India, the mango is one of the most widely consumed fresh fruits in the world. Cultivated for over 6,000 years, the mango comes in over 50 varieties — ranging in color from greenish, yellowish to reddish, often tinged with purple, pink, orange-yellow or red.

• • • Legend has it that in the eighth century, French Emperor Charlemagne first tasted this soft cheese at a monastery in Reuil-en-Brie and fell instantly in love with its creamy, rich flavor. The favorites of kings eventually become favorites of the people, and Brie is no exception.



Photo by Nancy Suttles

## Plank-Roasted Pears with Blue Cheese

### • Ingredients

4 large, ripe Anjou or Bartlett pears  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted  
2 tablespoons wildflower or other pure,  
natural amber honey  
½ cup crumbled blue cheese, such as  
Maytag or Point Reyes  
Fresh thyme sprigs for garnish

NOTE: This recipe can easily be divided in half if your EGG cannot accommodate two planks at the same time, or you can stagger the cooking.

Suggested plank: 2 cedar or alder grilling planks, soaked in water for an hour. Preheat the EGG for direct cooking without the convEGGtor at 350°F/177°C.

### Method

Cut the pears in half lengthwise, leaving the stems intact. Using a sturdy teaspoon or a melon baller, remove the core from each half. Place the pear halves on a baking sheet, cut side up.

In a bowl, mix the melted butter and honey. Brush the honey mixture over the cut surface of the pears. Sprinkle the pears with the crumbled blue cheese.

Place the planks on the cooking grid and close the lid. When the planks start to smoke and pop, after 3 to 5 minutes, open the lid and turn the planks over using a grid gripper. Quickly place the pear halves on the planks, cut side up. Cover and plank-roast for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the pears are scorched around the edges. Garnish with thyme sprigs and serve.

Recipe © 2012 by Karen Adler and Judith Fertig and used by permission of The Harvard Common Press

Photo courtesy: 25 Essentials: Techniques for Planking



### THYME:

Store fresh thyme in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper drawer of your refrigerator or stand sprigs in a glass of water on the refrigerator shelf.

When cooking with thyme, be aware that one fresh sprig equals the flavoring power of one-half teaspoon of dried thyme.

• • • Whether you serve these over dressed greens as a salad, on their own with a bold red wine as an appetizer, or as a sweet-savory dessert with a glass of port, you'll savor the extra flavor that plank-roasting over high heat gives this mild fruit. For plank-roasting, you'll scorch one side of the plank, then turn it over and place the fruit on the scorched side. The plank of fruit goes right over the fire in this recipe, so make sure you soak your plank for the full hour. Having a spray bottle of water handy is a good idea, so you can remoisten the plank during cooking — just be careful not to douse the pears with water or spray into the hot coals.



## Planked Beef Tenderloin with Buttered Brandy Baste

### • Ingredients

#### Buttered Brandy Baste

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter  
1/4 cup chopped green onion  
2/3 cup brandy  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
Kosher salt and seasoned pepper  
One 5- to 7-pound whole beef tenderloin  
2 to 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
1 1/2 tablespoons seasoned pepper  
1 1/2 tablespoons lemon pepper  
Kosher salt

NOTE: Pork tenderloin can easily be substituted for the beef in this recipe. Two 1 1/4 pound tenderloins would fit on one plank and serve 6 people.

Suggested plank: 1 cedar or oak baking plank, soaked in water for an hour. Preheat the EGG for direct cooking without the convEGGtor at 400°F/204°C.

### Method

To make the baste, melt the butter in a medium-size saucepan over medium heat, and sauté the green onion for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the brandy, soy sauce, and mustard and cook for about 5 minutes. Season with salt and seasoned pepper. Set aside.

Lightly brush the tenderloin with olive oil. Combine the seasoned pepper and lemon pepper and sprinkle over the tenderloin. Sprinkle salt over the tenderloin.

Sear the tenderloin for 3 to 4 minutes per side, using cooking grid for direct heat.

Using the Grid Gripper and barbecue mitts, carefully remove the cooking grid and add the convEGGtor, legs up, and replace the grid. When the internal temperature of the EGG reaches 400°F/204°C, set the tenderloin on the plank and spoon some of the baste over the top of the meat. Place the plank on the middle of the cooking grid; close the dome and cook for 20 minutes. Spoon some more of the baste over the meat and continue to cook until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the tenderloin registers about 130°F/55°C for medium-rare, about 20 minutes more.

Heat the remaining baste and spoon it over the planked tenderloin. Remove from grill, tent with aluminum foil and let rest for 5 to 10 minutes before carving.

Serves 6 to 8

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### SALT AND PEPPER

It is appropriate that salt met pepper in France, a country of both romance and sophisticated cuisine. In Europe, until the 17th century, sugared foods were served together with salted dishes — it was the French that created the salt-sweet divide and, in doing so, laid the foundation for the salt and pepper partnership. King Louis XIV deserves a special mention for his role in this culinary marriage — it was he who paired salt with pepper. The king had proclaimed that pepper was superior to any other spice and, therefore, it became the only spice other than salt acceptable for use in his royal court. As a result, salt and pepper became bonded — forever.





• • • A chef's tip for planking a larger cut of meat is to give it visual appeal by searing the outer surface of the meat first and then placing it on the plank and completing the cooking process; you can do the searing over a hot fire on the EGG. This brandy baste adds color and flavor; it is so good that you'll be tempted to eat it with a spoon! You can also use pork tenderloin in this recipe with great results.



Photo courtesy: *25 Essentials: Techniques for Planking*

## Planked Salmon with Honey Glaze

### • Ingredients

- ½ cup Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup pure, natural honey
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons grated orange zest
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme plus extra for garnish
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 (7-ounce) salmon fillets, skin on
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Suggested plank: 2 maple or cedar grilling planks, soaked in water for an hour. Preheat the EGG for direct cooking without the convEGGtor at 400°F/204°C.

### Method

Whisk the mustard, honey, balsamic vinegar, orange zest, and 1 teaspoon thyme together in a small bowl.

Place the cedar planks on the grid, close the lid of the EGG, and preheat for 3 minutes. Open the lid and turn the planks over, brush them with the olive oil, and place 2 salmon fillets on each plank. Season the salmon with salt and pepper and brush generously with the honey glaze. Close the lid of the EGG. Cook the salmon for 12 to 15 minutes for medium.

Remove from the heat, garnish with thyme, and serve immediately.

Serves 4

From the *Big Green Egg Cookbook*, Andrews McMeel Publishing



### HONEY

Pure, natural honey is an organic sweetener with no additives, adapts to all cooking processes and has an indefinite shelf-life. Over time, honey has become a staple in our pantries, our recipes and even our language as a term of endearment. Flavors vary based on the nectar source, giving honey a variety of nuances that keeps food adventurers on their toes.

Honey photo: Courtesy of Silverbow Honey Company, [silverbowhoney.com](http://silverbowhoney.com), used with permission.

• • • Grilling on a plank infuses the salmon with a woody, smoky flavor while keeping the fish moist and flavorful. The flavor is boosted by basting the fish with a honey glaze enlivened with citrus. Serve this right on the plank for a rustic, seafaring presentation.



## Pepper Jack–Stuffed Chicken Breasts with Chipotle and Bacon Slather

### • Ingredients

#### Chipotle-Bacon Slather

- 1 cup mayonnaise (low-fat is okay)
- 1/2 cup cooked crumbled bacon
- 1/4 cup chopped green onion
- 1 chopped chipotle chili in adobo sauce,  
with additional sauce if desired

- Four 4 to 5 ounce boneless, skinless  
chicken breast halves
- 8 slices pepper Jack cheese

Suggested plank: 1 oak or cedar grilling plank, soaked in water for an hour. Preheat the EGG for indirect cooking without the convEGGtor at 350°F/177°C.

### Method

To make the slather, combine all the ingredients in a medium bowl.

Cut a horizontal pocket into each chicken breast without cutting all the way through. Stuff each pocket with 2 slices of cheese, and then place the chicken breasts on the plank. Spread each breast with the slather, making sure to spread it so as to seal the edges of the chicken to the plank.

Place the plank on the grid: close the lid and cook until the glaze is golden brown and a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the breast registers 160°F/71°C, 25 to 35 minutes.

Carefully remove plank from grill and serve the chicken from the plank.

Serves 4

Recipe © 2012 by Karen Adler and Judith Fertig and used by permission of The Harvard Common Press

Photo courtesy: 25 Essentials: Techniques for Planking



#### BACON TID-BITS:

You are probably familiar with the phrase “bring home the bacon.” In the twelfth century, a church in the English town of Dunmow promised a side of bacon to any married man who could swear before the congregation and God that he had not quarreled with his wife for a year and a day. A husband who could bring home the bacon was held in high esteem by the community for his forbearance.

• • • Boneless chicken breasts cook beautifully on planks. We incorporate four ways to flavor the chicken in this single recipe, and it is simple and easy to achieve a terrific result.

Stuffing chicken breasts adds flavor and moisture, as does “slathering” them. The plank gives a nice woody flavor to the chicken, and the smoke adds the pièce de résistance! Canned chipotle chili peppers in adobo sauce are available in most large supermarkets — check the Hispanic or international seasonings section. The adobo sauce is very spicy, so use it sparingly if you decide to add a little to the slather. You could also make the glaze using half of a chili instead of a whole one; taste it, and if it’s not too hot for your palate, then add the other half. The unused peppers and sauce can be refrigerated for several weeks or frozen for several months.



## S'mores with Bananas

### • Ingredients

- 8 graham cracker squares  
(about 3 inch pieces)
- 4 – ½ oz. pieces of a semi-sweet  
chocolate bar
- 8 pieces of sliced bananas
- 4 – 8 large marshmallows

### Method

Place soaked plank on the cooking grid and close lid. Heat plank for 3 minutes and flip plank, using tongs or Grid Gripper.

Assemble s'mores directly on plank, placing a cracker first, chocolate, bananas, marshmallows and top with a cracker. Close the dome and cook about 6-8 minutes, or until marshmallow is melted and crackers are toasty.

Serves 4 – best to garnish with campfire stories or kids of any age!

Recipe © Fire and Flavor Grilling Co.

Suggested plank: 1 cedar grilling plank, soaked in water for an hour. Preheat the EGG for direct cooking without the convEGGtor at 350°F/177°C.



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### MARSHMALLOWS

The first recipe for s'mores was published in 1927 in the Girl Scout Handbook and the event marked the official introduction of the s'more into popular culture. The marshmallows of today are a far cry from their ancient ancestors. Marshmallows take their name from the marsh mallow plant (*Althea officinalis*). The root of the marsh mallow plant produces a sticky, white, almost jelly-like substance. Supposedly, the Egyptians took advantage of it as early as 2000 B.C.E., combining it with honey to make a candy. The Greeks, (and, later, Arabs and Indians), used marsh mallow for medicinal purposes, often as an ingredient in preparations to quiet coughs.



Big  
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Special thanks to:



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Fire and Flavor Grilling Co.

Sherwood Forest

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**CAUTION** – When placed on the cooking grid, a plank will become very hot. Do not attempt to handle the plank without heat protective gloves or a tool such as a Grid Gripper to grasp the plank for lifting. Failure to take precautions may result in burns or other injury. See Safety Tips at [BigGreenEgg.com](http://BigGreenEgg.com)

**DO YOU WANT THAT SAFE OR MEDIUM-SAFE?**

Use a food thermometer to make sure you cook raw meat and poultry to a bacteria-killing temperature. Check your steps at [FoodSafety.org](http://FoodSafety.org)

