



*Bohatty's Gourmet Grass Fed Beef*

December 2007

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## *The Grass Fed Gourmet*

### **Improving Cheap Roast Beef**

*From Cook's Illustrated Jan/Feb 2008*

*Exerts from an article by David Pazmino*

For most families, Sunday roast beef isn't prime rib; it's a lesser cut that's sometimes good, sometimes not. My grandfather could take an inexpensive cut & make it special. I wanted to work that magic on my own Sunday roast.

First I needed to zero in on the most promising beef. After a week of testing I had a clear winner: the eye-round roast. Though less flavorful than fattier cuts from the shoulder (or chuck) and less tender than other meat from the back leg (the round) the eye roast had 1 key attribute the others lacked: a uniform shape from front to back.

#### **High or Low Heat?**

The next challenge was choosing between the 2 classic methods for roasting meat—high and fast or low and slow. I started with the high heat approach by quickly searing the meat on the stove top and then transferring it to a 450 degree oven for roasting. I found this method yielded meat that was overcooked and dried-out.

But before heading down the low-temperature path, which normally involves temperatures between 250 and 325 degrees, I wanted to try something more extreme. To extract maximum tenderness from meat, the popular 1960's nutritionist Adelle Davis advocated cooking it at the temperature desired when it was done. For a roast to reach an end temperature of 130 degrees (medium rare) the process could involve 20-30 hours of cooking. Davis's advice wasn't new. Benjamin Thompson, the 18<sup>th</sup> century physicist who invented the roasting oven, observed, that leaving meat to cook overnight in an oven heated by a dying fire resulted in exceptional tenderness.

Tossing aside practical considerations like food safety and the gas bill, I decided I had to replicate these 2 experts' findings. I set our specially equipped oven at 130 degrees and popped in an eye round. Twenty-four hours later, I pulled out a roast with juicy, meltingly tender meat that tasters likened to beef tenderloin.

#### **The Lowdown**

When I thought back to the test kitchen's past discoveries, I found that beef contains enzymes that break down its connective tissues and act as a natural tenderizers. These enzymes work faster as the temperature of the meat rises—but just until it reaches 122 degrees, at which point all action stops. Roasting the eye round in an oven set to 130 degrees allowed it to stay below 122 degrees far longer than when cooked in the typical low-temperature roasting range.

But given that most ovens don't heat below 200 degrees—and that most home cooks don't want to run their ovens for a full day—how could I expect others to re-create my results? I settled for 225 degrees as my lowest starting point. I also decided I would brown the meat first to give it nice color and a crusty exterior. Searing would also help to ensure food safety, since bacteria on roasts are generally confined to the outside. When I took the roast out of the oven, however, I was disappointed. It was tender, but nothing like the texture of my 130 degree roast. To keep the meat below 122 degrees longer I decided to turn off the oven just before the roast reached 122 degrees. As the oven cooled, the roast would continue to cook even more slowly. Using a meat probe thermometer I shut off the oven when the meat reached 115 degrees. This kept the temperature below 122 degrees another 30 minutes, allowing the enzymes to continue to tenderize the meat, before creeping to 130 degrees for medium-rare.

To add to the taste, testing showed that salting the meat with Kosher salt 24 hours before searing and roasting gave the best results. This gave the salt time to penetrate the meat with the added benefit of acting as an enzyme to break down proteins to further improve texture.

#### **Slow-Roasted Beef**

1 boneless eye-round roast 3½ to 4½ pounds  
4 teaspoons kosher salt or 2 teaspoons table salt  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided  
2 teaspoons ground black pepper  
Sprinkle kosher salt evenly over roast, cover & refrigerate 18-24 hours. Pre-heat the oven

to 225 degrees. Pat roast dry with paper towels; rub with 2 teaspoons oil and sprinkle pepper over roast. Heat the remaining oil in a 12 inch skillet over medium-high heat. Sear roast until browned on all sides. Transfer roast to a wire rack set in a rimmed baking sheet. Roast until meat-probe thermometer or instant-read thermometer inserted into center of roast registers 115 degrees for medium rare, 1¼ to 1¾ hours, or 125 degrees for medium, 1¾ to 2¼ hours. Turn oven off; leave roast in oven, without opening door, until thermometer inserted into the center of the roast registers 130 degrees for medium rare or 140 degrees for medium, 30 to 50 minutes longer. Transfer roast to carving board and let rest 15 minutes. Slice meat crosswise as thinly as possible and serve.



Thinly slicing the eye round is the last step in transforming it from tough to tender.

#### Farm Notes

December has brought about 8 inches of snow, covering the rye grass our steers were eating. As they were getting finished enough for harvest, we sold them to another grass based processor. This closes out our 2007 crop of beef. Our 2008 steers are doing great on our stored forages and will go to green grass around the first of April 2008 with harvest expected in late fall. We look forward to meeting your beef needs in 2008. Other newsletters can be found on our web site at <http://www.gourmetgrassfedbeef.com>

We, here at Bohaty's Gourmet GrassFed Beef, wish all our customers and friends a warm and wonderful holiday and may all your hopes for 2008 be realized.



Merry Christmas &  
Happy New Year

### *Bohaty's Gourmet Grass-Fed Beef*

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#### **Learn More About Our Herd**

Our cattle are born and raised here on our farm and we know what is in everything that they eat. Of course as calves they get mothers' milk, but as they get older they learn to eat the grasses that their mothers eat. During the months when green grass is unavailable they are fed hay and other forages grown on our farm. They are finished on our green growing grass and harvested while the grass is still of high quality. Our soils are tested and we add the soil amendments necessary to assure our grasses will provide the best possible nutrition for our cattle so they will produce the most healthy, nutrient dense, and flavorful beef possible. Our cattle are not implanted with hormones and antibiotics are given only if necessary to treat an

individual animal. This treated animal will not be included in our grass fed beef program.

Our British White steers spend most of their life grazing on green grass. This keeps them healthy and free of such bacteria as e-coli. In winter, usually between late November and early April, they eat hay and stored forages. The rest of the year they are rotated frequently to the freshest grass on the farm. We use irrigation to keep fresh grass in front of our steers all spring, summer and fall. We also use our British White cow herd to follow behind the steers and clean up the grass the steers don't eat. The pasture is then irrigated and allowed to rest for several weeks. This helps keep the grass in the best possible condition for the best grazing.