



DORY'S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART
FLESHMAN

Preserving the history of the news business

It seems strange, if not somewhat eerie, to be going through another change with The Observer and the Baker City Herald.

It is not unlike hanging the wash on the line in a changing wind — sometimes brisk and whipping — other times hanging limp in the hot sun but always changing.

It was difficult at times wondering if the clothespins would hold their place on shirrtails of information or if the aging material would shred into nothingness against brutal outside forces.

Now it is a weeping-in, a gathering-in of what was known and remembered and facing the unknown, the challenges and excitement of what might be in the newness of whatever the changing winds might dictate.

For myself, my clothespins held firm through the changing winds even while wondering if my Dory's Diary column would survive through the dark of night, the wash not yet gathered in.

As for the moment yet, I am ready for the next wearing.

As I continue on, the past flashes in piecemeal from the Sixth Street building where I was a firm if temporary part of the whole, to Fifth Street where my connection was by an electric wire from La Grande to Baker City and back again, and now an uncertain future determined from my own desk at home.

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BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

Spruce up your porch with a big flower pot

Lately gigantic glazed pottery pots have been for sale at various local retail discount stores. Some stores have had them on sale. Some of these pots have really stunning glazes and would be show stoppers sitting on your porch.

To decide whether you need one of these or not, there are of course factors to consider:

- Safety:**
- Will your porch accommodate such a pot?
 - Is the porch so small that a large pot would look out of proportion?
 - If a large pot sits there, will there still be ample room to walk by without danger of falling?
 - Will plant foliage be in the way?
- Aesthetics:**
- Is there a color of pot available that will not clash with the house or color of plants/foliage you want the pot to contain?
 - Is there a size available that will hold the kind/amount of plants you wish to be there.
 - Are you planning to keep the plants over the winter? If so, do you have room for the pot in your house or are you planning to transplant it/them to other pots?
 - Is your porch sunny or shady or mostly one or the other so you choose the right plants to go into the pot.

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GET MORE FROM YOUR GRILL

■ Tips for picking the right cuts, and a selection of recipes designed to bring out the best in the beef you grill on the barbecue this summer

By Ben Mims
Los Angeles Times

If you think there's nothing new to learn about steaks, think again.

I recently asked Katie Flannery, the second-generation scion of Flannery Beef, a well-regarded Bay Area beef purveyor, to share her beef grilling secrets. She told me four things I found to be aha moments that make me excited to get back to the grill this summer, with recipes from Katie Flannery herself and two Los Angeles chefs who serve her beef on their menus.

First, be on the lookout for prime hanger steak. No matter how trendy it becomes, hanger is always more affordable than ribeye, strip and filet — and it's always more flavorful. Buying it prime-grade — a subjective term that means a steak with the highest percentage of fat marbling — ratchets up the flavor even more. "All the extra fat that a prime hanger steak contains really mellows out any kind of gamey iron flavor that you might associate with hanger," Flannery says. "It's hands down my favorite steak, and if you ever see it, buy it without any hesitation."

Second, thinner is better with skirt steak. There are two different muscles sold as skirt steak. "There's the 'outside skirt steak,' which actually hangs inside the cow's diaphragm. This is sometimes called 'flap' meat and is thicker and chunkier," Flannery says. "Then there's the 'inside' skirt steak, which actually hangs outside the diaphragm; this is the true skirt steak and is what you want to use. It's thin and delicate and cooks up so fast."

In Aaron Franklin's "Franklin Steak," he calls this cut the "outside skirt steak," eschewing naming conventions to be technically correct. The thinnest skirt steak at your butcher will be the right one.

Third, when you splurge on a rib-eye steak, you want it cut from the front, or chuck, end of the rack — because it contains the largest proportion of what Flannery says is the tastiest part of the cow. (Her custom-cut 3-inch-thick bone-in rib-eye Jorges are such steaks.)

To get this cut from your butcher, ask him or her to cut two 3-inch-thick steaks, including the first two rib bones, from the chuck end of the rib primal (the whole cow section from which all rib-eye steaks are cut).

Finally, Flannery advises adding ground dry-aged beef scraps to your burgers. When I saw dry-aged beef being used in burgers

on restaurant menus, I thought supremely pricey dry-aged steaks were being ground up for hamburger meat. (The price of the burgers usually supported that idea.)

SICHUAN CHILE HANGER STEAK

Chef Brandon Kida of Hinoki & the Bird in Century City, California, utilizes the intense beefy flavor of prime hanger steak as a backdrop to flavor with loads of red chiles and Sichuan peppercorns. Prime hanger steaks have more marbling than regular, or "choice," hanger steaks you often see in grocery stores, so it's worth searching out. Ask your local butcher to order it for you, or if you can't find it, use regular hanger steak, which will still taste great coated in the fragrant spices of this stir-fry-like dish.

25 minutes. Serves 4.

- 1½ pounds trimmed prime hanger steak
- Flaky sea salt
- 2 tablespoons Sichuan peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon whole coriander seeds
- 1 tablespoon whole cumin seeds
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 10 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 3 cups dried red chile Japones or chiles de arbol
- 4 scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal
- 1 large wedge calamansi (Filipino lime) or lemon

1. Prepare a charcoal grill for direct, high-heat grilling or heat a gas grill to high. (Alternatively, heat a large cast-iron skillet over high heat.) Season the steak all over with salt and add to the grill or pan. Cook, flipping once halfway through, until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the steak reads 120 to 125 degrees for medium-rare doneness. Transfer the steak to a plate, tent loosely with foil, and let rest for five minutes while you make the spice mixture. Leave the grill on.

2. Combine the Sichuan and black peppercorns and coriander and cumin seeds in a mortar and pestle or spice grinder and finely grind. Transfer the steak to a cutting board and cut across the grain into quarter-inch-thick slices.

3. Heat the oil in a large cast iron pan or skillet over high heat on the grill (or on your stove). Add the garlic and cook, stirring, until

fragrant, 20 to 30 seconds. Add the red chiles and reserved spice mixture and cook, stirring constantly, until lightly toasted, one to two minutes. Add the sliced steak and toss quickly to combine with the spices (you don't want to cook the steak more), about 10 seconds. Season with more salt.

4. Immediately transfer the steak and spices to a large serving bowl or platter. Sprinkle with the sliced scallions, squeeze the citrus wedge all over, and serve immediately.

VARIATION

SICHUAN CHICKEN-FRIED STEAK

Whisk two large eggs in a bowl, place one and a half cups all-purpose flour in a second bowl, and two cups panko breadcrumbs in a third bowl. Slice the raw hanger steak into quarter-inch-thick slices and season with salt and pepper. Dredge the slices first in flour, next in egg, and then in breadcrumbs, shaking off any excess. Heat two quarts peanut oil in a large Dutch oven or deep-fryer until it registers 350 degrees on a deep-fry thermometer. Working in batches, add the steak slices and fry until golden brown and just cooked through, two to three minutes. Transfer the fried steak to paper towels to drain briefly, then toss in a bowl with the Sichuan spice mixture and scallions. Serve with the calamansi or lemon wedge.

GRILLED RIB-EYE STEAK WITH PISTACHIO GREMOLATA AND CHARRED BALSAMIC BROCCOLINI

Chef Vartan Abgaryan of Yours Truly in Venice, Calif., serves Flannery's Jorge steak with a floral herb and citrus gremolata, teeming with sweet poached garlic cloves, and a side of grilled broccolini dressed in a tart balsamic vinaigrette. Flannery sells its Jorge steaks nationwide via its website, flannerybeef.com. But you can also ask your local butcher for a 3-inch-thick bone-in rib-eye steak, cut from the chuck end, as a substitute. Because these steaks are so large, it is important to remove them from the refrigerator at least 30 minutes before you plan to cook them, so that they cook evenly.

50 minutes. Serves 4 to 6.

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Jay L. Clendenin/The Los Angeles Times/TNS
Aged ribeye steak with pistachio gremolata, from Vartan Abgaryan at Yours Truly in Venice, California.



Jay L. Clendenin/The Los Angeles Times/TNS
Prime hanger steak with Szechuan spices and citrus, from chef Brandon Kida, at Hinoki & the Bird, in Century City, California.