



All of these procedures, unless stated otherwise, start off with four things that are common across the board. In addition to these steps the oven temperature is to be set at 375°F, it's a great temperature to stay in control, without sacrificing time in terms of cooking your proteins.

- 1. Equipment** - A oven safe heavy bottomed pan, (heavy bottom pans conduct more even heat and allow for a more complete and evenly cooked recipe).
- 2. Oil** - You want oil with a preferable high smoke point such canola oil, coconut oil, peanut oil. Note: Research oils that meet your dietary and allergic needs.
- 3. Searing** - This one goes without saying but flavor is the most important component when cooking anything. Searing allows for the protein's flavors to stay locked into the meat.
- 4. Prep** - Make sure to take your proteins out of the refrigerator 20 mins. before cooking, really cold meat tends to over cook on the outside and under-cook in the middle, room temperature meat cooks more evenly.

## BEEF & VEAL

Temperature ranges

115° -120°F rare, 120°-130°F mid-rare, 130-140°F medium, 140°-150°F mid well, 165°F well done

Beef and veal are some of the easiest cuts of meat to properly cook depending on the cut or weight of the protein! Luckily we have selected the weight and cut for those meats and eliminated the stress of research for you.

Preheat your oven to 375°F

Well oil your pan & get it nice and hot! While your pan is heating up season your beef/ veal well on all sides seconds before putting in the pan, if you season your protein too far in advance the seasoning will withdraw moisture from your protein, which results in an uneven sear.

Turn your heat to medium and place your meat in the pan, give it a solid 1-2 minutes on each side. Once the sear is even across the meat, place it in the oven for 3 1/2 mins. for rare, 4 1/2 mins. for medium rare, 5 1/2 for medium. Take out of oven and place on a cutting board or plate to rest for 5 mins. Resting allows for complete cooking (carry-over cooking) and the flavor to lock inside!

While the meat is resting this is the time when you can begin to plate your meal. Your protein should be the last item (other than garnishing) that you place on the plate!

## AIRLINE CHICKEN BREAST

**What is an Airline Chicken Breast?** *Airline chicken breast is nothing more than a nickname for a particular cut of chicken breast. It is a boneless breast with the first joint of the wing still attached. The breast is served with the wing part sticking up, causing some people to claim that the name comes from it resembling the wing of an airplane. Another explanation is that since food for air travel needs to be prepared far in advance, airlines back in the day created a special cut of chicken breast that wouldn't dry out as much as normal.*

Chicken is one of the most finicky proteins to cook in terms of flavor as well as the challenge of not drying out the meat. These tips will allow a more confident approach to cooking one of the most overcooked proteins.

Season your chicken evenly, place in a well oiled hot pan. Sear across all sides. Place in a 375°F oven for 15 minutes.

With our stuffed chicken there is no gray area in terms of temperature the chicken must be fully cooked! By taking your chicken out once the temperature reaches 155°F ensures full cooking including the carry over cooking method without drying out your chicken! Many make the common mistake of not taking carry-over cooking into account by pulling their chicken out at 165°F. By the time the protein rests it will be well over 175°F thus leaving your chicken dry!

Tip: When using a temperature probe it is imperative that your chicken is probed at the center of the stuffing, this ensures proper cooking to avoid illness!

## GRILLING BEEF - VEAL

115-120°F Rare | 120-130°F Medium Rare | 130-140°F Medium | 140-150°F Medium Well | 165°F Well Done

## GRILLING \*PORK

130-140°F Medium | 140-150°F Medium Well | 165°F Well Done

\*Pork is not recommended to be eaten below medium. At Café Luna we always select the safest, humanly processed pork for consumption. There is still a risk to contract an illness, so it's important to use 130-140°F as your range for temperature.

Grilling can be one of the most amazing forms of cooking anything! The end result produces a product that has a unique flavor and if done properly a beautiful presentation. There is no perfect way to grill, below are the rules we follow here to ensure we get a consistent, flavorful product to our guests.

### Three rules to remember before you grill:

- 1. First things first** - Make sure your grill is clean and has a thermometer that can tell you the heat from your grill. When cooking the more information you have the more successful your cooking will be, most grills are now almost always equipped with an internal thermometer.
- 2. Equipment** - A towel or pot holder, tongs, resting tray, a wide spatula, and a probe thermometer. These are the common tools we use to ensure a safe and proper cook.
- 3. Hot zones and cold zones on your grill** - This is the most important part of grilling, every grill master can attest to it. You need as much control as you can have when grilling because the temperatures can easily get over 500°F. You need areas on your grill where you can put the meat to rest while the other proteins (*that require a longer cook time*) cook for additional time to ensure a proper cook, remember every protein is different. We use a gas grill with four burners, we turn three on and one completely off, that's our "Cold Zone" it's not actually cold but its significantly cooler so that they won't over cook or dry out your meat while making sure it's still warm to serve.

Make sure your protein is well seasoned, properly oiled to prevent sticking and at room temperature to ensure even cooking. You want to have the grill near 450°F when you start to cook. Once the meat is on the grill turn the heat down to medium at about 350°F degrees.

- Place the protein on a 45 degree angle against the grates of the grill. Your whole cooking process will consist of time and rotation. It will give you a nice restaurant quality diamond presentation on your meat.
- After 2-3 minutes rotate the meat another 45 degrees on the same side.
- After another 2-3 minutes flip the meat on that same angle. You'll see the pattern!

By cooking your meat in timelines with the meat on that certain angle is a way we use to measure when the meat is done. Once your meat has reached the desired temperature take it out to rest. If you're grilling different proteins together then this where you would use that "Cold Zone" to hold your rib eye steak while you're waiting on your delicious "Duroc Farms" pork chop to reach desired doneness. Our meats will typically range from 8-12 minutes total cook time. For thinner cuts we aim for the 8 minute range such as flat iron steaks, skirt steak etc.

In case you're wondering, yes carry-over cooking still applies to grilling (*the meat will continue to cook when it is resting*).

## FRESH FISH

The art of cooking fish is second to none, there is no temperature to guide you, there is only perfect or overdone. These following tips can help you achieve a properly cooked piece of fish. Believe me it is not as intimidating as that may seem but we have all had overcooked fish and it is not a pleasurable experience below are instructions for pan searing and grilling a piece of fish.

### Three essential things to achieve a properly cooked fish.

**1. FRESH FISH!!** - I cannot stress this factor enough, fresh fish is the foundation to a great meal. Here at *Café Luna* we use only the freshest locally sourced seafood daily. Hand fabricated by yours truly to ensure that proper quality is served every day. When at the market look for fish that is full in color, ask if it's frozen or fresh. Fresh seafood should smell like the ocean not like fish. If it smells fishy it is defiantly not fresh. Visit the San Diego Harbor for second to none seafood quality.

**2. Equipment** - Use a heavy bottomed pan for evenly cooked fish as noted in the meat section of this guide, a heavy bottomed pan conducts heat evenly to ensure a proper doneness. Fish Spatula preferably a metal one, this flexible spatula allows for a gentle way to handle your fish which is essential to not breaking your piece of fish apart.

**3. Prep** - A well oiled pan and fish for the grill make the biggest difference in cooking a fish. One of the reasons, is that fish doesn't release a ton of fat therefore it tends to stick to the surface you're cooking on. When seasoning you want to pat the fish dry and then season right before you cook again salt draws out moisture and will ruin your cook.

**4. Use the 80/20 Method** - When we cook fish we will use the 80/20 method meaning cooking 80% on one side then 20% on the other, this creates a beautiful crust and color on the fish

Pan seared fish is my favorite method it creates a crispy crust and allows for more even cooking. As with any sear you want a hot well oiled pan.

- Place your fish presentation side down (belly side down).
- Cook the fish on medium high heat for 3-4 minutes when you see the browning happen around the sides is when your fish is oven ready.
- Place in a 375°F oven for 4 minutes. Once out of the oven your fish should be 80% of the way cooked.
- Flip the fish (remember be gentle it is at its most fragile state at his moment).
- Add about 3 Tbsp of butter and baste your fish, this will complete the cooking process, add a brilliant shine and impart a delicious flavor. Once the butter has browned that's when your fish is done and enjoy.

Grilling fish is a delicious option as well but we have to remember that certain fish types aren't suitable for grilling you want a firmer fish that can hold up. Having a too delicate fish can break apart and all through your grill.

- Properly oil your clean grill and your fish. I personally use olive oil spray it's the best to create a nonstick fish without leaking too much oil on your grill causing a flare up.
- Place your well seasoned fish on the grill at a 45 degree angle.
- Cook fish for 3 minutes then rotate another 45 degrees.
- Cook an additional 3 minutes then flip your fish gently. Once flipped cook for 4-5 minutes until fish is firm but not too hard take off grill and enjoy.

## RISOTTO

**Equipment** - You'll need at least a 6 qt pot and a rubber spatula. Do not use a metal utensil to stir, the metal is too hard and will break up your rice and turn it into a mush, you want even full grains.

- Place your risotto and stock in the pot. Place on medium heat and stir consistently until stock is absorbed by the rice.
- Once absorbed add heavy cream, parmesan and stir.
- Once heavy cream is well absorbed by the rice it is done. Serve up a plate of your amazing risotto. (Garnish it with fun herbs).

## VEGETABLES

We leave this section clear for your dietary needs or personal preference but we would still love to share how we prepare our vegetables.

1. Your veggies will be blanched so all you would need to do is add 3 Tbsp of butter and 1 oz of oil.
2. Once oil and butter is nice and hot add about 2 Tbsp of fresh minced garlic then add your vegetables.

In this process, since the vegetables are blanched you would need to heat it through and impart flavor. Season with salt and pepper at the end Enjoy.

LET'S GET COOKING!

*Chef De Cuisine  
Marco Gonzalez*