

Meat Bible from store to table

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Anyone who's ever wondered which cut to put into a pot roast (hint: don't use filet mignon) will appreciate "Lobel's Meat Bible," a recipe-and-reference guide from New York's Lobel family butchers.

The 300-plus-page no-nonsense volume walks cooks from buying meat to getting it on the table in the tastiest, most cost-efficient way.

Helpful tips pepper each chapter. When buying beef, look for "fine-needle marbling" of fat. May through October is the time to buy both lamb and pork, when the animals will have enjoyed a varied diet. Pasture-raised chickens and other fowl trump the "free-range" variety because they feast in the open on flavor-enhancing grubs and insects. The Lobels also advocate heritage or heirloom meats, from animals such as Tamworth pigs and Tunis lambs, and offer suggestions for finding them. Each chapter ends with recipes for putting your new knowledge to use.

CHICKEN KEBABS WITH CILANTRO-LIME CHUTNEY

Because of the shape of chicken breasts, it isn't possible to cut them entirely into 1½-inch cubes, as directed in this recipe. For even cooking, cut thinner parts into longer strips and fold them together when placing them on the skewers.

Start to finish: 4 hours (1 hour active)

Servings: 4 mains, 8 appetizers

**For the chicken:
4 tablespoons lime juice,**

divided

**1 tablespoon vegetable oil
¼ cup plain yogurt**

**1½-inch piece fresh ginger
(about 1 inch thick), peeled
and sliced into coins**

3 large cloves garlic

1 tablespoon ground

coriander

1½ teaspoons ground cumin

½ teaspoon ground black

pepper

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

¾ teaspoon garam masala

(spice blend)

1 tablespoon kosher salt

**2½ pounds boneless, skin-
less chicken breasts cut into
1½-inch cubes**

**3 tablespoons melted
unsalted butter (ghee or clarif-
ied butter are best)**

**Fresh cilantro or mint
leaves for garnish**

**Cilantro-lime chutney
(recipe below)**

■ In a food processor, combine 3 tablespoons of the lime juice, the oil, yogurt, ginger, garlic, coriander, cumin, black pepper, cayenne, garam masala and salt. Process until smooth, or nearly so.

■ Transfer the mixture to a large bowl and add the chicken, turning it to coat. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 and up to 12 hours, turning the chicken in the marinade once or twice.

■ When ready to cook, thread pieces of chicken on skewers, using about 4 per skewer, clustering the pieces together. Let the chicken sit at room temperature for about 30 minutes before cooking.

■ Meanwhile, combine the melted ghee or butter and the remaining 1 tablespoon lime juice. Set aside. Heat a grill or grill pan to medium. Oil the grill or pan just before cooking.

■ Grill the kebabs, turning as needed to grill all sides, until just cooked through, about 9 to 12 minutes total. If the chicken starts to burn, reduce the heat or move to a cooler part of the grill.

■ During the final seconds of cooking, brush the kebabs with the reserved lime butter and arrange on a platter or serving plates. Garnish with the cilantro or mint leaves and serve with cilantro-lime chutney spooned over the kababs or on the side.

CHUTNEY

Start to finish: 10 minutes

Makes about 1½ cups

**1-inch piece fresh ginger (1
inch thick), peeled and sliced
into coins**

**2 to 3 serrano peppers, or
2 small jalapeno peppers,
seeded**

**Six 6-inch lengths of scal-
lion greens (tops), chopped**

**2 cups very tightly packed
fresh cilantro, with thin stems
(about 2 very large bunches),
coarsely chopped**

**½ cup tightly packed fresh
mint leaves**

½ teaspoon ground cumin

¾ teaspoon garam masala

(spice blend)

1 teaspoon kosher salt

½ teaspoon sugar

**2 to 3 tablespoons veg-
etable oil**

¼ cup fresh lime juice

■ In a food processor, combine all ingredients except the lime juice. Process until finely chopped, pulsing and scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. Add the lime juice and process until a bright green paste forms. It should be spreadable but not quite fluid. Serve or transfer to an airtight container and store in the refrigerator for up to a week.