

COWBOY STEAKS

WITH SMOKED SHALLOT BUTTER

SERVES: 4 TO 6 | PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES | GRILLING TIME: ABOUT 1 HOUR
SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: 2 LARGE HANDFULS MESQUITE WOOD CHIPS, SMALL DISPOSABLE FOIL PAN

BUTTER

- 1 shallot, about 1 ounce, peeled and cut lengthwise into quarters
- 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh Italian parsley leaves
- 2 teaspoons dry sherry (optional)
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest

- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 bone-in rib eye cowboy steaks, each about 2 pounds and 2 inches thick
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder

To make many carnivores sing for joy like Maria prancing through the Alps in *The Sound of Music*, serve them marbled bone-in rib eye steaks (aka cowboy steaks) that come with their own handles. The handles are not really for picking up the steaks, but the bones do protect and flavor the meat alongside it, making those parts often the juiciest and tastiest of all. Season these thick steaks well and let them stand at room temperature long enough so that the salt can draw out moisture and the meat can reabsorb those juices with the seasonings. That usually takes 30 to 40 minutes.

- 1 Soak the wood chips in water for at least 30 minutes.
- 2 Prepare the grill for direct and indirect cooking over medium-high heat (about 450°F).
- 3 In a small disposable foil pan combine the shallot quarters, oil, and paprika. Drain and add one handful of the wood chips to the charcoal or to the smoker box of a gas grill, following manufacturer's instructions, and close the lid. When smoke appears, place the foil pan with the shallot over **indirect medium-high heat**, close the lid, and cook until the shallot is tender, about 40 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and let cool for 10 minutes. Mince the shallot, transfer to a small bowl, and add the remaining butter ingredients, including ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper, mixing thoroughly. Refrigerate, covered, until firm. Remove from the refrigerator about 10 minutes before serving.
- 4 Lightly brush both sides of the steaks with oil and season evenly with 2 teaspoons salt, ½ teaspoon pepper, and the garlic powder. Allow the steaks to stand at room temperature for 30 to 40 minutes before grilling.
- 5 Drain and add the remaining wood chips to the charcoal or smoker box. When smoke appears, sear the steaks over **direct medium-high heat**, with the lid closed, for 6 to 8 minutes, turning once. Then move the steaks over **indirect medium-high heat**, close the lid, and continue cooking to your desired doneness, 12 to 14 minutes more for medium rare. Remove from the grill and let rest for 3 to 5 minutes. Serve warm, topped with the butter.

For a great steak to reach the level of a feast, it needs something special like the sweet succulence of this smoky shallot butter. Cook a quartered shallot in mesquite smoke until tender and golden. Mince the shallot and blend with softened butter, parsley, lemon zest, and maybe a little sherry.

