

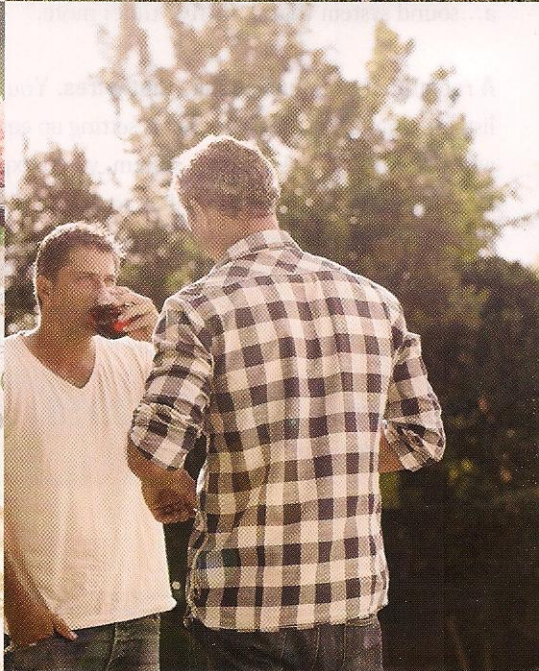
LIVING



# THE BEAUTY OF BARBECUE

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THROWING AN UPSCALE BACKYARD BBQ, FROM OUR FAVOURITE GOURMET RECIPES TO THE GREATEST GRILLING TOOLS

BY BRIONY SMITH | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS CHEN



**F**ORGET BURGERS and brats—barbecue has gone high-end. Foodies are firing up their grills and piling on luxe eats like lobster, boar, and pork loin, and creating full-on outdoor rooms—another hot home trend (see page 10)—where they can grill gourmet meals, complete with appetizers and desserts.



Australian celebrity chef Ben O'Donoghue is at the forefront of the sophisticated BBQ movement, creating mouthwatering global recipes like Singapore chili crab, Cape Town kingfish filets, and Mexican suckling pig tortillas for his TV shows and books.

He says barbecue is a great way to travel the world while staying in your own backyard. "You can try [a country's cuisine] on the barbecue without having to go to Thailand, India or Argentina," says O'Donoghue. "You get to really experience the culture."

It is, after all, the cooking style that's shared across many cultures. "The world is connected by barbecues," he says. "America, North Africa, India, Pakistan, China—the whole world is joined by one common form of cooking."

So how do you make your own international-inspired gourmet BBQ? O'Donoghue has put together a menu for us, and shared the tools, spices and inspiration you'll need to grill your best this summer.



**OZ EATS** Australians know how to eat well. Their secret? Cooking with fresh ingredients from farmers markets across the land. If you're heading down under, there's no better way to experience the country's cuisine. Here's our selection of must-see markets for travelling foodies:

**BAROSSA VALLEY** This is one of the most renowned culinary regions in the country. Visit the Vintners Sheds near Angaston to taste famous Barossa Valley products like artisanal cheese, live yabbies (crawfish), German meats and pastries, Lamington cakes, and citrus fruits.

**SYDNEY** The Sydney Fish Market is one of the biggest seafood markets in the world. Watch the morning auction, and try mussels, mahi mahi, prawns, swordfish, blue swimmer crab, and barramundi—then learn how to cook them at the market's Sydney Seafood School classes.

**MELBOURNE** Take guided tours of Prahran Market and Queen Victoria Market. Browse tropical treats like fingerlimes, paw-paws, and lychee, or try spicy crocodile sausages and jam doughnuts. To find one of the region's smaller markets, go to the Melbourne Community Farmers' Markets website ([mfmm.com.au](http://mfmm.com.au)).

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#### BARBECUED CORN WITH BACON AND CHILI BUTTER

"I've often come across corn recipes like this one while researching American barbecuing techniques. Here, I have combined the flavours with a barbecued corn dish I had in New York at a funky Cuban diner."

##### Serves 4

- 4 corn cobs, in their husks
- 8 strips smoked streaky bacon
- freshly ground black pepper

##### Chili butter:

- 100 g softened unsalted butter
- 1 red chili, chopped
- zest of 1 lime
- salt
- freshly ground black pepper

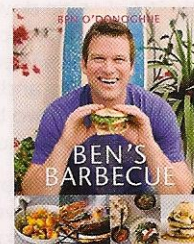
**PREPARE** your barbecue for cooking over a medium heat. Prepare the corn by pulling back the outer husks and removing all the strands of fibre, but without removing the husks.

**PLACE** two strips of streaky bacon on either side of each cob and season with pepper. Wrap the corn cobs back in their husks and secure with string at each end.

**COOK** the corn cobs for 30 minutes, continually turning them to prevent the husks from burning.

**MAKE** the chilli butter by combining the butter, chilli and lime zest, and seasoning with salt and pepper. When the corn is cooked, remove to a serving dish, untie the string and peel back the husk.

**SERVE** with a dollop of chili butter.



**Find more recipes in Ben's Barbecue (Hardie Grant Books), out in June 2011.**



## GRILLED LOBSTERS

"This recipe was inspired by a New Year's Eve I once spent in Norfolk. In the UK, they have fantastic native lobsters with big nippers and wonderfully sweet, tender flesh. We bought four largish lobsters but had little means of cooking them (i.e. pots!)."

### Serves 2

- 2 800–900g live lobsters or crayfish
- salt
- freshly ground black pepper
- 4 bay leaves

### Herb butter:

- 250 g unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tbsp chopped dill
- 1 tbsp chopped chives
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 small garlic clove, finely chopped
- salt
- freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp cognac

**CUT** the lobsters in half along the top from head to tail and open into two halves. Remove the gravel sack (the blackish tube along the tail).

**SEASON** the halves with salt and pepper and push a bay leaf under the flesh of the tail. To make the herb butter, combine the soft butter with the chopped herbs and garlic, and season with salt and pepper. Beat in the cognac, and allow it to infuse for around 30 minutes.

**PREPARE** your barbecue for direct grilling over a high heat. Place the lobster halves, flesh side down, over the heat and cook for four to five minutes. Turn them over onto the shell side and continue to cook for two to three minutes. The flesh should be nicely charred.

**SERVE** by removing the bay leaves and spoon one tablespoon of herb and garlic butter on top of each lobster half. Allow to melt and serve right away.

## GRILLED PINEAPPLE WITH RUM, GINGER AND LEMONGRASS SYRUP

"Ben, my pastry chef from the Atlantic Bar and Grill in London, met a Thai girl and travelled to Thailand to meet her family. He came back from his travels inspired by the wonderful food he'd experienced, and was particularly enthused by this recipe for grilled fruit."

### Serves 4

- 1 pineapple, skin removed and cut into quarters, lengthwise

### Syrup:

- 200 ml water
- 100 ml white rum
- 100 g sugar
- 3 cm piece of ginger, peeled and sliced
- 1 stick lemongrass, bruised
- zest and juice of 1 lemon
- zest and juice of 1 lime
- 1 dried red chili

### Spiced sugar:

- 1 dried red chili
- 2 tsp crystal salt
- 3 tsp superfine sugar

**PREPARE** the syrup by placing all the ingredients in a saucepan and bringing them to a boil, making sure the sugar has dissolved. Remove from the heat and cool, then strain.

**MARINATE** the pineapple in the syrup overnight. To make the spiced sugar, pound the dried chili and salt in a mortar until you have fine flakes of chili. Add the sugar.

**PREPARE** your barbecue for cooking on a medium–high heat. Place the pineapple over the heat and barbecue until caramelised, turning the fruit as required.

**SKEWER** the cooked pineapple with bamboo sticks and serve with the spiced sugar as a dipping condiment.

## TOOL TALK

Here are O'Donoghue's must-haves for great grilling:

- long-handled tongs and a scraper with a cutting edge
- roasting fork (for turning large joints and lifting delicate fillets)
- skewers (both metal and wood)
- thick gloves (for handling hot metal) and oven mitts
- basting needle
- foil and foil drip trays (throw in some absorbent material like gravel or cat-litter)
- a large, heavy cast-iron roasting tray, with a wire rack above
- beer opener—"You can't barbeque without a beer in your hand because then it would be work!" says O'Donoghue.

## QUICK FIX

Don't have the time to marinate? O'Donoghue swears by simple rubs to bring your BBQ fare to life. Just rub your favourite combo of salt, sugar, herbs and spices into your ingredients a mere 15 minutes beforehand.

Need inspiration? Try these combos from *Ben's Barbecue*:

- garlic, lemon, and green peppercorn salt
- smoked salt and rosemary
- Cajun spice (with cayenne, fennel, thyme and paprika)
- chipotle salt
- classic barbecue rib rub (with paprika, brown sugar, ginger, mustard, onion and garlic)



## GREAT GRILLS

Looking for a new barbecue to create culinary magic? These grills are smokin' hot (pictured top to bottom).

### SAVOUR THE FLAVOUR

Get your grill on with porcelain-enameled cast-iron cooking grates and Weber's patented Flavorizer bars that distribute heat more evenly.

**Weber Genesis EP-310 Gas Grill.** Propane: **130,000 miles**, Natural Gas: **135,000 miles**.

### KING OF GRILLS

Got a few different things on the barbie? Stainless steel Flav-R-Zone heat partitions and the Flav-R-Wave drip pan on this Broil King BBQ will make sure each part of your meal is cooked to perfection. **Broil King Signet 20 Grill.** Propane: **72,500 miles**, Natural Gas: **77,500 miles**.

### THE HEAT IS ON

This grill packs seven burners and 1156 square inches of cooking surface. Its twin cooking systems allow for both convection and high-intensity grilling styles. **Napoleon Prestige Series Gemini Grill.** Propane: **318,500 miles**. Natural Gas: **324,000 miles**.

For more high-spec BBQs, see page 40.

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