

Oven-Perfect Strip Steak with Chimichurri

*Start to finish: 1¼ hours (15 minutes active),
plus refrigeration | Servings: 4 to 6*

THIS RECIPE uses the gentle, controlled heat of the oven to replicate the “reverse sear” technique Argentini­ans use when grilling beef. Rather than start the steak over high heat to brown, then finish over low heat, the steaks start in a low-heat oven, then finish with a quick sear in either a blistering-hot cast-iron skillet or on a grill. The result is steak with a deep, flavorful crust that’s evenly cooked throughout, not overdone at the surface and just right at only the core. We call for strip steaks (also called strip loin or New York strip), but bone-in or boneless rib-eyes work well, too, as long as they’re 1½ to 2 inches thick. We learned to season cuts of beef with nutmeg at La Cabrera in Buenos Aires; the spice doesn’t leave a distinct flavor of its own but rather enhances the steaks’ meatiness and smoky notes.

Don’t use preground nutmeg. For best flavor, purchase whole nutmeg and grate it yourself. You could use a grater made specifically for nutmeg, but a fine wand-style grater also works well.

—J.M. HIRSCH and DIANE UNGER

Kosher salt and ground black pepper
1 tablespoon freshly grated nutmeg
(from 2 whole nutmegs)
2 teaspoons white sugar
Two 20-ounce strip steaks (each about
2 inches thick), patted dry
2 tablespoons grapeseed or other
neutral oil
Chimichurri (p. 27)

▪ **Set a wire rack** in a rimmed baking sheet. In a small bowl, stir together 2 tablespoons salt, 1 tablespoon pepper, the nutmeg and

sugar. Measure out and reserve 2 teaspoons of the seasoning mixture, then rub the remainder onto all sides of the steaks, pressing it into the meat. Place the steaks on the prepared rack and refrigerate uncovered for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours.

- **Heat the oven to 250°F** with a rack in the middle position.

- **Place the baking sheet** with the steaks in the oven and cook until the centers reach 110°F, 45 to 55 minutes. Remove from the oven and let stand for up to 30 minutes.

- **In a 10- or 12-inch cast-iron skillet** over medium-high, heat the oil until barely smoking. Place the steaks in the skillet and cook, without moving them, until well browned, about 3 minutes. Using tongs, flip the steaks and cook until the second sides are well browned and the centers reach 120°F (for medium-rare), 2 to 3 minutes. Alternatively, the steaks can be seared for the same time over direct heat on a very hot charcoal or gas grill with a well-oiled grate.

- **Transfer the steaks** to a carving board and let rest for 10 minutes, then cut into thin slices. Place on a platter, pour on the accumulated juices and sprinkle with the reserved seasoning mixture. Drizzle with a few spoonfuls of chimichurri and serve with additional chimichurri on the side.

Chimichurri

*Start to finish: 15 minutes, plus cooling
Makes 1½ cups*

THIS RECIPE can easily be halved, but if you're like us, you'll find uses other than steak for this delicious condiment; we also like it on grilled pork, fish and other seafood. Chimichurri can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week; bring to room temperature before serving.

Don't substitute fresh oregano. The stronger flavor and texture of dried oregano are hallmarks of chimichurri.

¾ cup neutral oil
¼ cup sweet paprika
¼ cup red pepper flakes
¼ cup dried oregano
2 medium garlic cloves, finely grated
½ cup balsamic vinegar
Kosher salt

- **In a small saucepan** over low, combine the oil, paprika, pepper flakes and oregano. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the mixture begins to bubble, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the garlic. Let cool to room temperature.

- **In a medium bowl**, combine the vinegar and 1 teaspoon salt, then stir until the salt dissolves. Slowly whisk in the cooled oil mixture. ♦



Thick-cut strip steaks cook flawlessly and effortlessly in the oven, with a skillet char to finish.