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TASTE

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THINGS WE LIKE



Brooks Johnson /
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The surprisingly refreshing cold press coffee + lemonade at Dovetail Cafe in Lincoln Park.

It's not weird; it's great

By Brooks Johnson
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Iced coffee and lemonade.

Stay with me now. I'm no chemist, so I'm going to have to use more rudimentary terms to describe the acid interaction that occurs when mixing the slightly tart citrusy sweet lemonade with the bittersweet aromatic bean juice over ice: Magic.

I, too, was skeptical of the combination, but on a warm spring day earlier this year I put my faith in the barista pitching the drink at the outstanding Dovetail Cafe inside the Duluth Folk School.

I don't think I've ordered a different drink there since.

Refreshing is an understatement. Taking that first sip, the hearty depth of the coffee is preserved and the aromas prepare you for the usual bitter-sweet treat. Then the citrus strikes and it all washes back clean and suddenly you're not sure why you thought this would be a silly idea. In fact, you've tried to replicate it at home and you proselytize to everyone who will listen and even some who won't that this black-and-gold beverage is the liquid nectar of the gods. So drink up while it's cold and grab another one for the road.

Dovetail Cafe

1917 W. Superior St. inside
Duluth Folk School
218-481-7888
duluthfolkschool.com/dovetail



Prime hanger steak with Szechuan spices and citrus, from chef Brandon Kida of Hinoki & the Bird, in Century City, Calif.
Photos by Jay L. Clendenin / Los Angeles Times

By Ben Mims
Los Angeles Times

If you think there's nothing new to learn about steaks, think again.

I recently asked Katie Flannery, the second-generation scion of Flannery Beef, a well-regarded San Francisco-area beef purveyor, to share her beef grilling secrets. She told me four things I found to be aha moments that make me excited to get back to the grill this summer, with recipes from Katie Flannery herself and two Los Angeles chefs who serve her beef on their menus.

First, be on the lookout for prime hanger steak. No matter how trendy it becomes, hanger is always more affordable than rib-eye, strip and filet — and it's always more flavorful. Buying it prime-grade — a subjective term that means a steak with the highest percentage of fat marbling — ratchets up the flavor even more. "All the extra fat that a prime hanger steak contains really mellows out any kind of gamey iron flavor that you might associate with hanger," Flannery

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THE BEST INSIDER TIPS FOR GRILLING BEEF



Raw prime hanger steak, seen before grilling.

SICHUAN CHILE HANGER STEAK

Chef Brandon Kida of Hinoki & the Bird in Century City, Calif., utilizes the intense beefy flavor of prime hanger steak as a backdrop to flavor with loads of red chiles and Sichuan peppercorns. Prime hanger steaks have more marbling than regular, or "choice," hanger steaks you often see in grocery stores, so it's worth searching out. Ask your local butcher to order it for you, or if you can't find it, use regular hanger steak, which will still taste great coated in the fragrant spices of this stir-fry-like dish.

25 minutes. Serves 4.
1½ pounds trimmed prime hanger steak

2 tablespoons Sichuan peppercorns
1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
1 tablespoon whole coriander seeds

Flaky sea salt
1 tablespoon whole cumin seeds

¼ cup vegetable oil
10 garlic cloves, finely chopped
3 cups dried red chile Japones or chiles de arbol
4 scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal

1 large wedge calamansi (Filipino lime) or lemon
1. Prepare a charcoal grill for direct, high-heat grilling or heat a gas grill to high. (Alternatively, heat a large cast iron skillet over high heat.) Season the steak all over with salt and add to the grill or pan. Cook, flipping once halfway through, until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the steak reads 120 to 125 degrees for medium-rare doneness. Transfer the steak to a plate, tent loosely with foil, and let rest for five minutes while you make the spice mixture. Leave the grill on.

2. Combine the Sichuan and black peppercorns and coriander and cumin seeds in a mortar and pestle or spice grinder and finely grind. Transfer the steak to a cutting board and cut across the grain into quarter-inch-thick slices.

3. Heat the oil in a large cast iron pan or skillet over high heat on the grill (or on your stove). Add the garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 20 to 30 seconds. Add the red chiles and reserved spice mixture and cook, stirring constantly, until lightly toasted, one to two minutes. Add the sliced steak and toss quickly to combine with the spices (you don't want to cook the steak more), about 10 seconds. Season with more salt.

4. Immediately transfer the steak and spices to a large serving bowl or platter. Sprinkle with the sliced scallions, squeeze the citrus wedge all over, and serve immediately.

VARIATION:

SICHUAN CHICKEN-FRIED STEAK

Whisk two large eggs in a bowl, place one and a half cups all-purpose flour in a second bowl, and two cups panko breadcrumbs in a third bowl. Slice the raw hanger steak into quarter-inch-thick slices and season with salt and pepper. Nudge the slices first in flour, next in egg, and then in breadcrumbs, shaking off any excess. Heat two quarts peanut oil in a large Dutch oven or deep-fryer until it registers 350 degrees on a deep-fry thermometer. Working in batches, add the steak slices and fry until golden brown and just cooked through, two to three minutes. Transfer the fried steak to paper towels to drain briefly, then toss in a bowl with the Sichuan spice mixture and scallions. Serve with the calamansi or lemon wedge.

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