SMOKED · EASY

Cold-Smoked Butter and Salt on the Kamado, with Beech Sawdust

Two pantry staples in a single cold-smoke session, with the charcoal unlit: unsalted butter on ice and flaked salt in a thin layer, with the chamber at 25 °C and never above 30 °C.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
20 min	240 min	8	25 °C

Ingredients

- **250 g** unsalted butter, fridge-cold
- **1 carga** beech sawdust for cold smoke, as much as the generator spiral takes
- **1 ud** tea light, to light the sawdust
- **100 g** flaked salt
- **1 kg** ice cubes: 500 g in the tray and the rest kept in the freezer
- **1 ud** country loaf (hogaza) or sourdough, for tasting

Method

1 CHECK THE THERMOMETER OUTSIDE

The butter sets the day: it softens above 20 °C and the generator adds some heat inside the dome. An hour ahead, leave one ThermoPro TP17H probe outside, in the shade. If it already reads 20 °C or more, the butter will start to soften before it takes the smoke: better at night or first thing in the morning. The ceramic must be completely cold; if the kamado was used the day before, it still holds heat. On the Costa Blanca, there is usually a window from November to April.

2 PREPARE THE BUTTER AND SALT

Cut the 250 g of butter, cold, into 2 cm cubes and spread them in a single layer in a metal tray of around 15 cm, the cubes almost touching and not stacked; if you prefer to grate it, do so straight from the fridge. Return it to the fridge for 30 minutes while you set up the rest. Spread the 100 g of flaked salt in another dry tray or plate of 15 cm, in a thin layer a few millimetres deep.

3 LIGHT THE SAWDUST

Load the spiral of the Weber 17636 base with grillart beech sawdust up to the rim of the channel and level it with a spatula, without packing it. Bring a tea light flame to the end of the channel and take it away as soon as the sawdust smokes. Check outside for a few minutes that the thread of smoke keeps going, then lower the base onto the charcoal grate, empty and ash-free, pushed to one side, as the guide asks, so the smoke rises next to the trays.

4 SET UP THE CHAMBER

Fit the cooking grate of the Kamado Bono Media. On one side, a tray with 500 g of ice and, resting on top, the butter tray. On the other side, the salt, as far from the ice as possible. Leave air between the trays and the edge. Fix the ThermoPro probe with its tip in the air at grate height, next to the butter. Close the dome: bottom vent at 1 cm, top vent half open.

5 WATCH THE FIRST HOUR

Hold the chamber at 25 °C. If it climbs past that, swap the melted ice for the ice in reserve and pour the water away from the salt. Above 30 °C, open the dome; if it does not drop, stop and take the butter to the fridge. If the smoke comes out white and dense, open the bottom vent a little more, as the bitter smoke guide explains. Every 30 minutes, stir the salt with a spoon.

6 TAKE OUT THE BUTTER

At one hour, taste a cube on a piece of bread: it should taste of clean beech smoke, with no bitterness. If it needs more, leave it up to 2 hours at most, tasting every half hour. Take it out earlier if the cubes lose their edges or shine with fat. Once out, cover it and put it straight in the fridge; close the dome again at once so the salt does not lose its smoke.

7 FINISH THE SALT

The salt carries on alone, stirred every 30 minutes, for a total of 2-4 hours. Taste it from the 2-hour mark: the flake takes on a toasted colour and a smell of smoke you notice when you open the dome. When you like it, take it out and let it cool and dry in the air for a few minutes. Store it in a dry glass jar, tightly closed, away from humidity.

8 SALT AND REST THE BUTTER

With the butter at kitchen temperature for a few minutes, mash it in a bowl with a spatula and add half a teaspoon of the smoked salt, or more to taste. Shape a cylinder with baking parchment, roll it tightly and close the ends. One night in the fridge spreads the smoke and softens it. Keep it wrapped in the fridge and treat it as an opened butter: use it soon and never past the use-by date of the original.

Editor's tips

- Salt absorbs humidity from the air and from melting ice. If it comes out a little caked, spread it on a plate for a few hours somewhere dry before putting it in the jar, and do not store it next to the coffee machine or the sink.
- Grated instead of cubed, the butter has more surface and takes up smoke sooner: start tasting it at half an hour. Put it on baking parchment in the tray so you can lift it out without it clumping.
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For a Christmas present, wrap the butter cylinder in baking parchment, tie it and add a small jar of smoked salt. Write on the label that the butter goes in the fridge, that it should be used soon, and the use-by date of the original butter.

- A slice of smoked butter on a freshly rested chuletón (Spanish bone-in rib steak), or a few flakes of smoked salt on a pan de cristal (a very thin, crisp, open-crumbed loaf) with tomato, are the most direct uses.

Gear for this recipe

Kamado Bono Media 51 cm

For cold smoke you do not need a big kamado, but a sealed ceramic box with two vents that keeps the smoke still around the food. In the 51 cm Kamado Bono Media, the 44.5 cm cast-iron grate, according to the brand's spare-part data sheet, takes two 15 cm trays side by side with room to spare: the butter on its ice on one side and the salt on the other, with air between them so the smoke can pass. Below, the charcoal grate takes the 20 x 20 cm base, pushed to one side. That day it is not lit: the ceramic must be completely cold, and with the bottom vent at one centimetre the smoke circulates slowly.

mikamado.es/en/kamados/kamado-bono-media-51

Weber 17636: spiral cold smoke generator base, 20 x 20 cm

With no lit charcoal, the smoke has to come from something that barely heats, because butter softens above 20 °C. The Weber 17636 base is a 20 x 20 cm tray with a spiral channel that is filled with sawdust and lit at one end with a tea light: the ember advances slowly and gives off a thread of smoke with very little heat. In this recipe the session is short for the butter, 1 to 2 hours, and somewhat longer for the salt, up to 4; Weber speaks of smoke for hours without giving a fixed figure. Check that the charcoal grate of your kamado takes 20 x 20 cm.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/weber-cold-smoked-base-generador-humo-frio

grillart beech sawdust 0.5-1.0 mm for cold smoking, 3 kg

The base spiral needs fine sawdust, not chips or pellets. The grillart beech sawdust has a grain of 0.5 to 1.0 mm according to its data sheet, which recommends it for cold-smoke generators; pairing it with the Weber base is a deduction from grain size, not a declared compatibility. Beech is a mild wood with a sweet, discreet smoke, and that matters with butter: dairy fat absorbs smoke readily and a strong wood would leave it tasting of ashtray. On the salt, the same mild smoke leaves a toasted background that does not mask what it seasons. The 3 kg sack covers many loads.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/grillart-harina-haya-ahumado-frio-3kg

ThermoPro TP17H: 4-probe wired thermometer, -10 to 300 °C

In this recipe the deciding figure is low, 25 °C as the target and 30 °C as the ceiling, and the dome thermometer does not read it. The ThermoPro TP17H has four corded probes and a declared range from -10 °C, so a December afternoon does not leave it blind. Two work here: one with its tip in the air at grate height, next to the butter, which is the one in charge, because the butter warns you before the salt does; and another outside, in the shade, which tells you before you light the sawdust whether today is possible. The probe sits with its tip in the air, not touching the tray, or it would read the temperature of the metal rather than the chamber. It reads on the screen, no app.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/thermopro-tp17h-4-sondas-cable

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/mantequilla-sal-ahumadas-en-frio-kamado

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