REVERSE-SEAR · MEDIUM

Whole Picanha Reverse-Seared on the Kamado with Homemade Chimichurri

Picanha (rump cap) is Brazil's star cut: a fat cap over tender beef. Here it cooks indirect at 120 °C to 50 °C inside, is seared over a hot fire and served with chimichurri.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
30 min	100 min	6	120 °C

Ingredients

- **1.2 kg** picanha (rump cap, tapa de cuadril), whole, with its fat cap
- **15 g** coarse salt (plus a pinch for the chimichurri)
- **1 cdta** freshly ground black pepper
- **1 manojo** fresh flat-leaf parsley, leaves and tender stalks only
- **4 diente** garlic, finely chopped
- **2 cda** dried oregano
- **4 cda** red wine vinegar
- **150 ml** extra virgin olive oil
- **1 pizca** dried chilli flakes
- **2 cda** hot water, for the chimichurri

Method

1 SALT THE PICANHA

Pat the piece dry and, with a very sharp knife, score the fat in a 1 cm crosshatch without cutting into the meat. Season all over with the coarse salt and pepper and leave it 30-45 minutes at room temperature while you light the kamado. Do not leave it out of the fridge for more than an hour.

2 LIGHT WITH THE DEFLECTOR

Fill the firebox with charcoal, light it and set the deflector in with the grate on top. Leave the vents wide open until you reach 100 °C, then close the bottom vent down to a finger-width gap and the top vent to a quarter open: the chamber should settle at 120 °C. Allow 15-20 minutes of stability before the meat goes in.

3 INSERT THE PROBE

Push the wireless probe into the centre of the thickest part, horizontally and clear of the fat; the handle end, which holds the chamber sensor, must stay outside the meat. Set the picanha fat side up on the grate, away from the edge, and pair the probe with your phone with the target at 50 °C.

4 COOK INDIRECT

Close the lid and leave it shut. Hold the chamber at 120 °C by adjusting only the bottom vent in small steps and watch the internal temperature on your phone. Depending on thickness it takes 60-80 minutes to reach 50 °C. If the chamber drifts above 140 °C, close the vent a little more and wait.

5 MAKE THE CHIMICHURRI

Meanwhile chop the parsley by knife, not in a blender. Mix it with the garlic, oregano, chilli, vinegar, oil, hot water and a pinch of salt. Leave it at room temperature for at least 30 minutes; the sauce improves as the garlic softens in the vinegar.

6 PULL AND SET UP THE SEAR

At 50 °C inside, put on heat-resistant gloves and burp the lid (5 cm, about 5 seconds, face turned away). Lift the picanha out with the tongs, remove the probe and set it on a board. Still gloved, lift the grate, take out the hot deflector and put the grate back; open the vents fully and let the chamber climb to 250 °C or more, about 10 minutes.

7 SEAR OVER A HOT FIRE

With the clean grate over the coals, lay the picanha fat side down for 1-2 minutes, until it browns and crackles; watch for flare-ups from the dripping fat. Turn and sear the meat side for 1 minute and the edges for 30 seconds. Close the lid between turns, always burping it when you open.

8 REST, SLICE AND SERVE

Move the piece to a board and rest it 10 minutes, uncovered. Slice 1-1.5 cm thick against the grain, fat side up, and serve at once with the chimichurri. Close both vents fully to put out the coals.

Editor's tips

- Do not trim the fat: what you eat is the crust it forms in the sear. If the fat cap is very thick (over 2 cm), trim it to 1 cm so it renders properly and does not turn rubbery.
- If the chamber overshoots 140 °C at the start, the picanha reaches 50 °C sooner than planned and loses its margin for the sear. Stabilise before the meat goes in, and see the temperature problems guide if the fire runs away.
- A touch of gentle smoke works well: two or three chunks of cherry or holm oak spread through the coals when you light them, before the chamber settles, so the heavy early smoke clears before the meat goes in. Put the picanha in over clean, thin smoke, never thick and white.

- Dry the surface well just before the sear: any moisture makes the meat steam instead of brown. A few seconds with kitchen paper make the difference.

Gear for this recipe

ThermoPro TempSpike TP961: 150 m wireless Bluetooth probe

The recipe runs on internal temperature, and the TempPro TempSpike TP961 lets you follow the 50 °C from your phone without opening the lid. Per its listing the probe has two sensors (meat from -10 to 100 °C and chamber from -10 to 300 °C), the Booster repeater runs on 2 AAA batteries and the Bluetooth range reaches 150 m. The catch: it has to come out before the sear, as flare-ups can top that 300 °C.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/thermopro-tempspike-tp961-inalambrico

AB Gripper XL 46 cm: stainless steel hinged tongs

Lifting the picanha out at 50 °C and turning it during the sear are moves over coals at 250 °C or more. The AB Gripper XL tongs are 46 cm long, 304 stainless steel with a hinge, and keep your hand away from the fire without piercing the meat. The catch: with over a kilo of meat, grip it by the body, not the fat, which tears; and tongs this long give less feel on small bites.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/ab-gripper-pinzas-barbacoa-xl-46

Kamado Joe Classic III 18"

The reverse sear needs a kamado that holds 120 °C steadily and climbs to 250 °C or more within minutes once the deflector is out. The Kamado Joe Classic III has a 46 cm grate, dense ceramic that holds heat well and the Divide & Conquer system for setting up the deflector and grate; the whole picanha fits with room to spare. The catch: it weighs 108 kg without the cart (127 with it), so it is not a kamado you move around easily.

mikamado.es/en/kamados/kamado-joe-classic-iii

Jealous Devil 100% White Quebracho lump charcoal 15.8 kg

That is about two hours of fire, with a gentle stage at 120 °C and another climbing to 250 °C or more. Jealous Devil is 100 % Paraguayan quebracho blanco lump charcoal, a very dense wood, with only about 3 % ash according to its listing and a neutral aroma that lets the meat and any smoking chunks come through. The catch: the pieces are very large and, if you light with a small chimney starter, you will want to split them first.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/jealous-devil-quebracho-lump-charcoal

Rösle leather barbecue gloves: long, one size

Removing the hot deflector with the chamber above 120 °C and opening the lid at 250 °C calls for real protection. The Rösle gloves are leather with a cotton-polyester lining and 41.5 cm long according to their listing, so they cover the forearm too. The catch: they cannot be washed, and leather is not ideal for handling greasy meat; that is what the tongs are for.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/rosle-guantes-cuero-barbacoa

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/picana-reverse-sear-chimichurri-kamado

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