

What's Cooking at CAB

With Chef Michael Ollier

A week in wine (and beef) country

I hate to use a cliché, but sometimes they're just too true to avoid. Here's one for chefs and beef lovers: *Good things come to those who wait.*

It's true with wine and beef, two things I spent plenty of time with early this fall at the Sonoma Wine Country Weekend in California. My cohorts on the brand initiatives team with Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) spent a week in wine country meeting with writers from national publications, sampling beef, talking with consumers and fostering a good relationship with our vineyard partners. We also managed to fit in plenty of California countryside and vineyard viewings. What a great week!

Stark's Steakhouse, one of the brand's five-star restaurant licensees, also played an important role in our weekend. Owner Mark Stark is a well-known "mover and shaker" in the Sonoma food scene and was a gracious host for our media dinner.

Mark is also a connoisseur of dry-aging beef — an artform few have perfected. You may have seen beef labeled "aged to perfection," "aged for 21 days" or simply "aged beef" on restaurant menus. Don't be fooled — it's likely all these labels indicate the same process. The vast majority of beef is wet-aged, meaning it is sealed in a vacuum-packed bag and refrigerated. This process helps with tenderization, and 21 days takes it to an optimum level. Again, most of the

beef you buy in a retail store or restaurant will be wet-aged for some amount of time.

Dry-aging, on the other hand, is truly an elite artisanal technique where carcasses or subprimals are held in open-air humidity- and temperature-controlled environments. Steaks served at Stark's are dry-aged for 35 days to maximize flavor intensity. Dry-aging tenderizes the product just like wet-aging, but it allows for more flavor development while the moisture loss concentrates it. The aroma and taste of dry-aged beef is usually described as earthy or nutty, and rich and robust.

This intense flavor usually comes with a little more intense price tag, too. The moisture lost in the aging process can pretty

dramatically increase price per ounce. Finding a fine restaurant that serves dry-aged beef may be a long process in your neck of the woods, but when you do, it's an eating experience that you might want to savor. Look for it at restaurants that serve the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand. Chefs who have the time and expertise to dry-age their products usually start with only the best. These guys take their steak seriously, continuing the long and careful art process that started on your ranch.

Dry-aging probably isn't an option back at the ranch. Instead, Mark sent me back to Ohio with one of his favorite Stark's recipes that delivers satisfaction with any kind of aging. This is what impressed national media members in California, and I think it will be a hit at your place, too.

Pair this roast with your favorite red wine or stout beer and settle in for a cozy late fall gathering. This is a great recipe to serve family-style with hearty potatoes and veggies of your choice. It's a meal friends and family around your table will talk about for some time, just like your first taste of a dry-aged steak. Trust me; those are meals worth waiting for. Enjoy!

Until next time,
— Chef Michael



► CAB culinary and brand initiatives staff Darci Owens, Sarah Morehouse, Chef Michael Ollier and Barbara Burd make a great brand impression on Sonoma, Calif., wine and beef fans.

Rib Roast with Salsa Verde, from Stark's Steakhouse

Ingredients:

5 lb. CAB® rib roast
Olive oil for brushing
1 bunch basil
1 bunch parsley
1 bunch mint
½ cup capers, rinsed
2 each anchovy filet
1 Tbs. Dijon mustard
1 Tbs. sugar
1 Tbs. black pepper, ground
1 tsp. chili flake
1 clove garlic
1 cup extra virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 450° F. Place roast, fat side up, on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Brush entire surface of roast with

olive oil and rub with kosher salt and pepper.

2. Place beef in oven for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350° F and continue roasting for approximately 2 hours for medium (when thermometer registers 150° F), more or less for desired doneness.
3. Transfer roast to cutting board; loosely tent with foil and let stand 15-20 minutes. Slice across the grain.

While the roast is resting, prepare the salsa verde by picking all the leaves off the herbs and placing in the bowl of a food processor. Add the remaining ingredients and pulse on and off until you have the consistency of a pesto. Season with salt to taste.

