



Kettle Slow Boil

Chris Girvan-Brown

Here in Australia we have not been exposed to the variety of barbecue grills and smokers that are available in some other places, so we have to a large extent learned to make do with what we do have.

When the Weber Kettle was first introduced into Australia, it shook our barbecue world. Back then a barbecue for us was a plate of rusty steel set over a wood fire. On this al-

tar we would sacrifice sausages and lamb chops in the name of barbecue. The food was not considered to be done unless there was a thick coating of black char! Simply being burnt was not enough; it needed to be crunchy!

The Weber Kettle was a revelation for those who learned to use it properly. For others it was a frustration, much as it is today. Even

now we have idiots who can't bring themselves to cook lid down!

We have used our kettles mainly for roasting and grilling. For us, the idea of “low and slow” was unheard of until a few short years ago. Frustrated by the limitations of the little charcoal fences and the two techniques described in the Weber user guide, we began experimenting with new fire setups.

The Fuse

The “fuse” method (affectionately referred to as the “snake”) is popular with Australian barbecuers wanting to cook “low and slow”. One of our [Aussie BBQ Forum](#) members

introduced it to us a few years back, after being taught it by one of the “good old boys” from America's south while on holiday.

The Fuse guarantees a stable temperature, is easy to setup, and can be relied on to cook your food while you are off doing other things. The configuration of the briquettes in the fuse dictates the amount of heat and the length gives the duration of the burn.

In this method, carefully lay two briquettes side by side on the charcoal grate around the wall of the kettle. Starting from the end of the “fuse,” carefully place another briquette on top of the two on the bottom, then



lean another on that one; continue leaning the top row on the previous briquette all the way around to the start. This structure ensures that as the fire burns, the lit briquettes will fall towards the unlit ones and not away from them. At the very start of the fuse, leave four briquettes without the top row. This is a kind of launching pad for the lit briquettes to “mount” the fuse and start the whole thing burning.



Light half a dozen or so briquettes in a chimney. Once they are burning well, carefully place the lit fuel on the “launching pad.” I have set the bottom and top vents to half open.



It is only necessary to adjust the vents if you are fighting ambient conditions like wind or extreme cold. Wind will blow through the vents and feed the fire making the fuse burn too fast; closing the vents a little can help, but the only real answer to wind is to





find a protected spot to cook. Opening the vents will let the fuel burn cleaner and hotter, which helps combat extreme cold.

After half an hour the temperature has settled down to 82° C (180° F). Another half hour later and the fuse has started to light and the temperature is stable at 105° C (220° F). Three hours later and the temperature is still 105° C (220° F). The fuse will progressively burn, but because there are only six or so briquettes burning at any time, the temperature will stay at 105° C (220° F) for many hours without the need for any maintenance. In fact, you don't even need to be home!

Place some wood chips, chunks, or herbs along the fuse for a progressive release of smoke flavor as the fuse burns.

Increasing the amount of fuel in the fuse will increase the temperature. One briquette will add roughly 25° C (50° F). For example, if I use a base of two briquettes in the base of the fuse, two on top of that and one more on the top of that (two more briquettes than in the previous example), the temperature settles in nicely at 152° C (305° F), a nice slow roasting temperature.





GRIM BEEF RIBS

Chris Girvan-Brown

We are blessed with a source of fantastic grass fed beef from the pristine Cape Grim pastoral land of North Western Tasmania. The beef short ribs from Cape Grim Beef are a legend here and treated with respect. They deliver an awesome feed!

First I make a basic salt and pepper rub:

- 1/2 cup rock salt
- 1/2 cup peppercorns

Toast the pepper and salt in a dry wok on high heat, turning the mix over constantly as it heats to “smoking hot.” In a few min-

utes, the pepper will release some of its oils and the smell will change. At this point, turn off the heat and let the mix cool. Grind the mix in a spice mill or pound it in a mortar and pestle until it becomes the consistency of rough table salt. The warm smoky spice of this is a great addition to any table. I have a small bowl on my dinner table all the time.

Note: Variations of this basic spice are good as well. Try adding a half dozen Cardamom pods, some split chillies, Allspice berries, or Star Anise to the mix before roasting. (Remove them before grinding.)





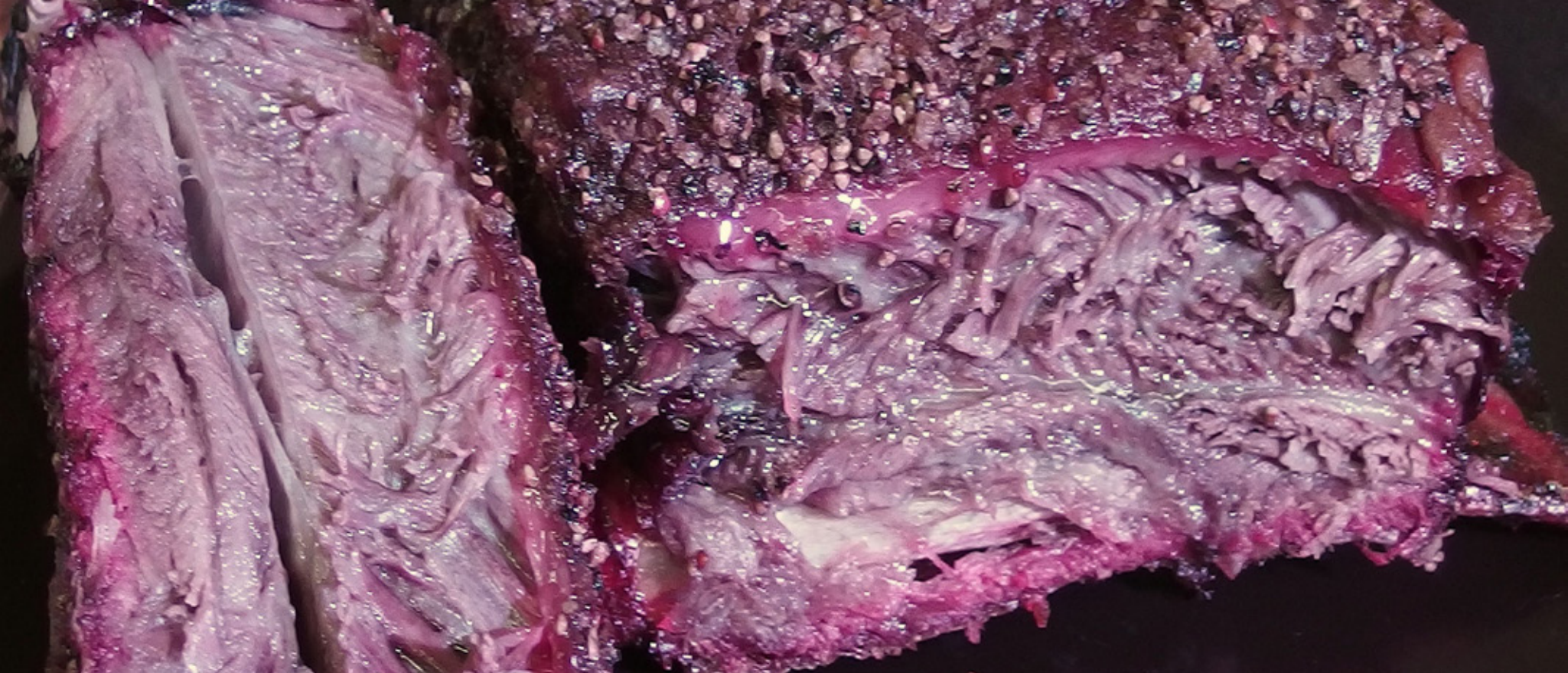
Cooking the Ribs

This could not be simpler! It's "set and forget"!

- Set up your kettle for a 3 briquette fuse. This will give you roughly 110° C (225° F) for the duration of the cook. Add some smoking wood if you like.
- Let the beef ribs come up to room temperature. Peel the membrane from the back of the ribs and coat with the salt and pepper rub.
- Bring the Kettle up to 110° C (225° F) and put the ribs on the grate.







- Place the lid on the Kettle and go have a good time with your mates. Seven hours later, come home and remove the ribs from the Kettle. Wrap them in foil to keep them warm while you pour a couple of drinks, pat the dog, make coleslaw, set the table, and turn on some good music.
- Serve the ribs and let your mates congratulate you on a massive day working hard cooking perfect short ribs!
- You shouldn't need to check the internal temperature of the ribs before you take them off. You'll know they are done because they will feel like they want to fall apart when you lift them. If you need to check, you'll see they are sitting nicely around 92–96° C (198–205° F).



Chris Girvan-Brown (aka Urban Griller) is Australia's BBQ Guru. He is the founding president of the Australian BBQ Association (ABBQA) and director and head BBQ chef of the Urban Griller BBQ Cooking School and Catering Company in Western Australia. He has written numerous BBQ articles for food magazines, instruction manuals, and cookbooks. He also does BBQ cooking segments for local radio and has been running BBQ cooking schools for 14 years.



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