

PRIME RIB PERFECTION

Prime rib is a huge cut of meat that is usually a centerpiece of a holiday meal. Prime rib is next to honey-baked ham, turkey, beef tenderloin, and filet mignon in terms of intimidating recipes. Prime rib is also very pricey. However, if you have ever had a well-cooked cut of prime rib, you know it is worth every penny for this beautiful, show-stopping piece of meat.

Prime rib is a large cut of beef from the rib section of the animal. It is incredibly flavorful and juicy because it is well-marbled. Most prime rib recipes call for the meat to be roasted in the oven, but it can also be smoked or grilled. If you are new to cooking prime rib, do not worry – I will give you some tips for preparing the perfect prime rib.

When buying beef, it's important to know the difference between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) beef grades of prime, choice, and select. USDA Prime has abundant marbling (flecks of fat), enhancing flavor and juiciness. USDA Choice has less fat marbling than Prime, but is high quality. USDA Select is very uniform in quality and typically leaner than the higher grades. Prime cuts are more expensive than choice and select cuts of meat. The name "prime rib" should **not** be confused with the grade of meat.

When planning a dinner, you may wonder how much prime rib you need to buy. The rule of thumb is 1 pound per guest for bone-in and 1/2 to 3/4 pound for boneless.

When purchasing prime rib, you can choose bone-in or boneless. The bones in the cut of meat act as a natural rack, which insulates and elevates the meat while cooking, keeping it juicy and protects from overcooking.

If you buy a bone-in prime rib, you can ask the butcher to cut the bone off and tie it to the roast for you. This gives you the benefits of the bones without having to slice them off.

In the fat, make shallow cross-hatched cuts (scoring) down to the meat. Scoring helps any seasoning penetrate the meat and encourages rendering. Plan ahead! It's best to season your prime rib generously with kosher salt for at least 24 hours and up to four days prior to roasting, letting it sit on a rack in the fridge uncovered. This will allow time for the salt to penetrate and season more deeply while drying out the surface, leading to better browning during roasting. When you take the prime rib out of the fridge before roasting, add pepper and any additional herbs. In addition, you can use the tip of a paring knife to shove thin slivers of garlic into the roast. Remove the prime rib from the refrigerator two hours before cooking to give it time to come to room temperature, which results in it being more evenly cooked and juicier.

I prefer the roast and reverse sear method. USDA recommends temperatures no lower than 325°F for cooking meat and poultry. Cook the prime rib until the internal temperature reaches at least 110°F (rare) or higher. Remove from oven, cover it with foil, and let rest for 20-30 minutes. Then, turn the oven temperature up to 500°F. Place the roast back in the hot oven for 8 to 10 minutes or until brown crust on the outside. Remove from the oven and carve right away.

Internal Temperature

When cooking meat, there will be residual heat and carryover cooking once the prime rib is removed from the oven. This means the internal temperature will rise 7-10 degrees more after removing the meat from the oven.

Prime rib is one of the most delicious and impressive pieces of meat you can cook.

(Sources: www.americastestkitchen.com; www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com; www.foodnetwork.com; www.savoryexperiments.com)