

Tagliata

In Tuscany some tell you never to season the meat with salt before cooking it as it makes the meat tough. In my experience seasoning the meat in advance hugely improves flavour and does not make it all tough, as long as you don't overcook it. Rocket leaves are traditional, but I like a mix of rocket and watercress and whatever else is to hand. And for a further British touch I serve creamed horseradish alongside.



Serves: 10 to 12

3kg ribeye steak, cut into six thick tranches (each at least 2" thick)

18 sage leaves

6 short rosemary sprigs

6 cloves garlic

olive oil

salt and pepper

rocket, watercress and other salad leaves as desired

lemons

1. Several hours in advance, season meat generously all over with salt. Finely mince sage, rosemary and garlic together, adding several good grindings of black pepper. Rub meat with a little olive oil then massage in the herb mix. Wrap well in clingfilm and refrigerate until one hour before cooking.
2. Heat a cast iron grill pan or outdoor charcoal grill until smoking hot. Sear steaks for approx 1-2 minutes on each side, changing their position half-way through so as to create a criss-cross effect with the grill's ridges. The steaks should be nicely browned all over, but still very rare inside. They will feel squidgy to the touch. Let rest on a baking sheet for at least 20 minutes and up to an hour.
3. Meanwhile wash and dry the leaves and prepare a simple dressing by whisking together one part lemon juice to one part olive oil and seasoning with salt and pepper.
4. Heat oven to 200C with rack in the upper half. Roast steaks for ten minutes, no longer. (If you prefer beef not so rare, leave them in a few minutes longer, but tagliata is usually left rare.) Remove steaks and tent with foil. Let rest 10-15 minutes. Meanwhile dress leaves and arrange across a platter.
5. Slice meat into thin slices, as much across the grain as possible, although this is difficult with ribeye steaks. Lay over leaves, sprinkle with Maldon salt and garnish with lots of lemon wedges.

Horseradish cream

Finely grate some fresh horseradish root using a microplane. Squeeze over just enough lemon juice to cover and mix in a pinch of salt. Leave to macerate for an hour or so. Mix in crème fraîche to taste, adding a little more salt or lemon juice if needed. Leave in the fridge to thicken up slightly for an hour or two.