



PRIME RIB

TODD JILBERT, GOLDEN TOAD

INTRO TO PRIME RIB

Prime Rib is one of my favorite dishes to cook and serve family and friends. Prime Rib, or Standing Rib Roast, is an American favorite and it is relatively easy to prepare. This is my intro to Prime Rib and once you complete the class, you will be able to cook a perfect Standing Rib Roast for your next family gathering.

WHAT IS A PRIME RIB ROAST

The Prime Rib Roast comes from the cow starting at rib #6 (from the head) and consists of seven full ribs. The meat running along the back side of the ribs is part of the loin muscle of the cow. This is the muscle that New York Strips, Rib-eyes, and Delmonicos are cut from. Prime Rib is often referred to as a “Standing Rib Roast” because you can roast it standing on its ribs.



PRIME RIB ROAST – END TO END

The first section of the roast, ribs 6 through 9, are closer to the cow's shoulder (aka the Chuck) and are referred to as the “Second Cut.” This section is also called the “Chuck End,” and “Blade End.” The rib bones are typically smaller on this end and the muscle is more separated with large deposits of fat. If you enjoy some fat with your well roasted Prime Rib, then this may be the end for you. The second section of the roast (ribs 10-12) is known as the “First Cut,” “Loin End,” or “Small End,” and is typically leaner with a larger Rib-eye portion of meat. The rib bones on this section are usually larger than ribs 6-9 of the Second Cut. I like to cook 4-5 bone rib roasts.

MARBLING

What is marbling? It is the amount of fat dispersed within the muscle. Fat equals flavor and tenderness in beef. The loin muscle of a cow is one of the most tender cuts available. The Prime Rib section of this muscle has advantages over the tenderloin because it contains a generous amount of web-like fat within the muscle. This web of fat is known as marbling.

BEEF GRADES

The USDA grades beef at the request of a beef packer. The three grades of beef are directly correlated to your meal's hit on your wallet. The picture at the left shows the three USDA grades of beef, Prime, Choice, and Select (from left to right). Make sure your meat package has the USDA shield on it to ensure you are getting the grade you are paying for. I can often find a USDA Choice grade package of meat with much more marbling than the one in this picture. I also like to “poke” the muscle portion of the roast to test tenderness. I can't remember the last time I purchased a



Select grade piece of meat, probably 25 years ago when I was attending College at San Diego State University. The majority of beef that I purchase today is Choice Angus Beef (CAB).



AGING

If you have a good relationship with a butcher near your house, you may be able to find a Dry Aged USDA Prime Standing Rib Roast. \$\$\$ This is when we start spending real money on our beef! Dry aging is the process by which whole cuts of beef are kept at controlled temperatures and humidity for weeks to months to promote tenderization and flavor characteristics. Tenderization occurs when enzymes break down some of the tougher muscle fibers over time. Flavor change is due to numerous reasons including oxidation, enzymatic, and bacterial action. Dry aged meat will develop deep nutty, cheesy aromas.



SEASONING

I season my Prime Rib Roasts in the morning and I let them set out to come to room temperature prior to hitting the smoker or the oven. I use my Golden Toad Prime Steak Rub and season liberally. Initially, the salt will draw out some moisture and end up dissolving in it. Over time, this salty liquid will dissolve some meat proteins (mainly myosin), loosening its structure, and allowing the salty juices to be re-absorbed into the meat. Your meat ends up better seasoned with less salty run-off. Seasoning the fat cap on top is not going to affect the flavor of the meat, but I do season between the meat and the bones after I cut the roast and before I tie it.



BONES

Bone in or boneless? It is really up to you and your preferences. There is a lot of debate regarding flavor and cooking properties of bone-in vs boneless rib roasts. I prefer to cook mine bone-in, but I cut and tie the roast. The bones act as a natural rack to roast on, and they will broil up for a nice snack the following day.

COOKING TO TEMPERATURE

First, get a good thermometer and start cooking your meat to temperature. You will end up with a much better product time and time again. I like my Prime Rib Rare to Medium-Rare. One thing you need to know about Prime Rib is because it is such a large volume of beef, it will continue to cook for a while after you remove it from your cooker. I typically remove my Prime Rib around 125°F. I let it set until the temperature stops climbing, usually 10 minutes, then I put it into a Cambro (insulated cooler – no ice) to rest for 30-60 minutes.

I cook my roasts hot first (400°F-450°F) for 15 minutes and then lower my smoker or oven to 325°F to roast the remainder of the cooking time. This causes a little more of a brown outer layer (1/4"-1/2") on the rib roast. This outer roasted layer carries a lot of good flavor and my family enjoys our Prime Rib this way. You can also start low and slow until the roast comes to temp and then broil or roast at 400°F-475°F to brown at the end of your cook. This may result in less depth of brown meat on the outside of your Prime Rib (more pink from center to edge). It's up to you, but the recipe you will get today starts hot.

Doneness	Description	Internal Temperature (Celsius)	Internal Temperature (Fahrenheit)	
Blue	Seared outside, raw inside	46-49	115-120	
Rare	Mostly red	52-55	125-130	
Medium Rare	Mostly pink with a red centre	55-60	130-140	
Medium	Pink throughout	60-65	140-150	
Medium Well	Mostly brown with a pink centre	65-69	150-155	
Well Done	Brown throughout	71-100	160-212	



RESTING

Resting is essential for tasty tender beef. The high temperatures from cooking causes the muscle to release moisture into the interstitial spaces between the muscle cells. Resting allows most of this moisture to reconstitute back into the muscle cells and once you slice your roast open, more of the moisture will be retained in the meat and not on your cutting board!

AU JUS

I don't use the drippings on the sheet pan. They are too salty and oily. I make my Au Jus separately and will include the recipe with this class.