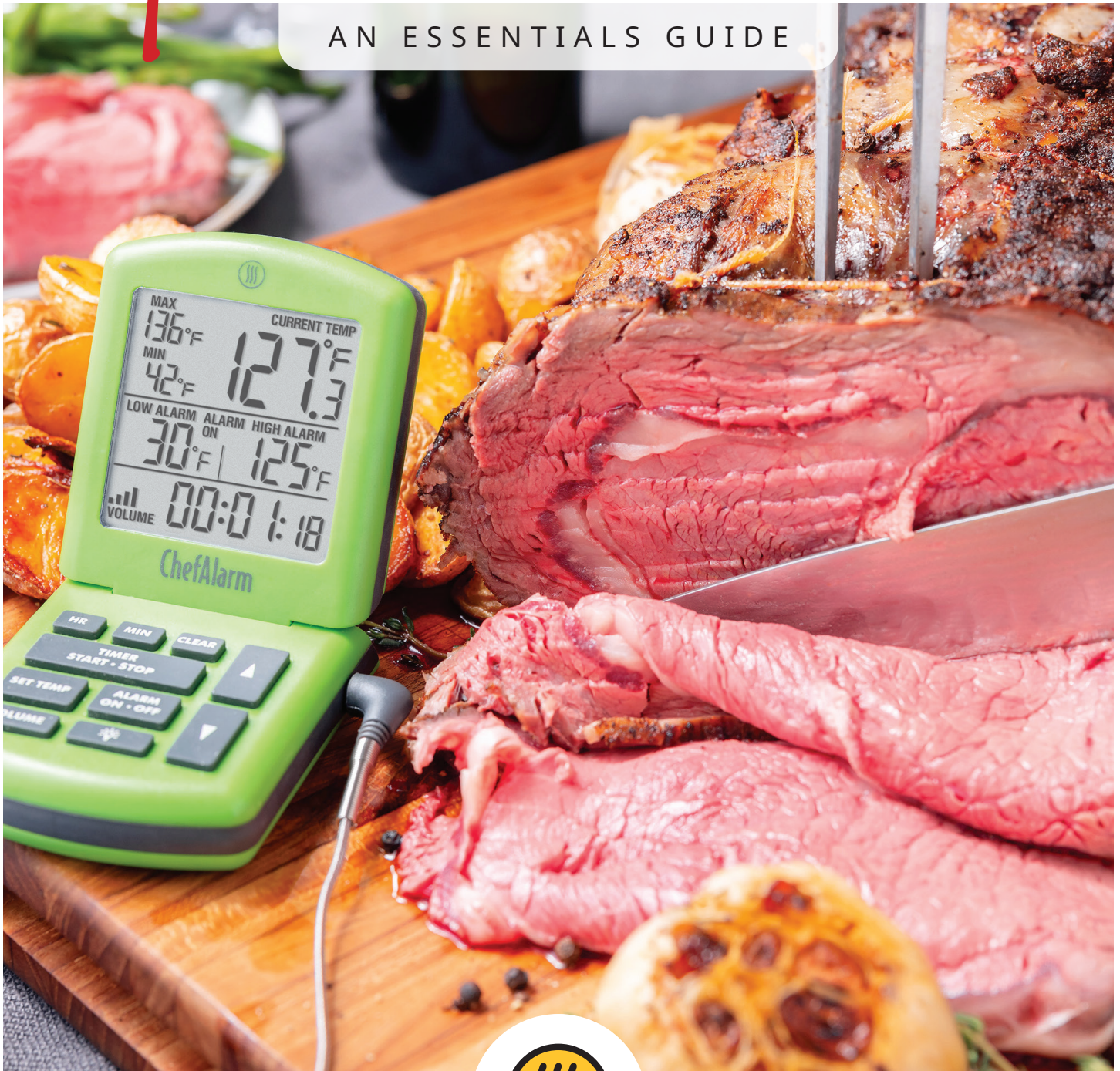


Prime ribs

AN ESSENTIALS GUIDE



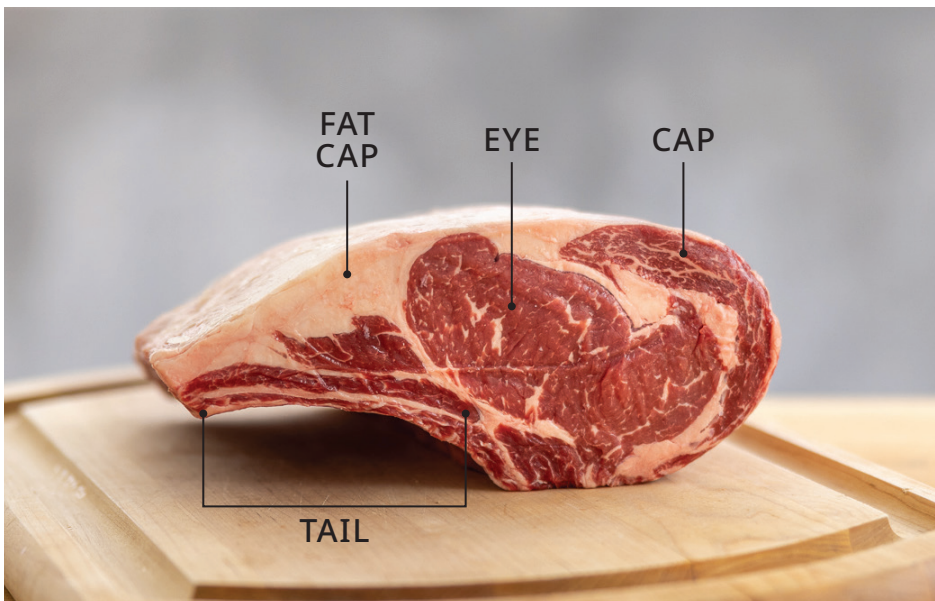
ThermoWorks

What is Prime Rib?

A prime rib can go by other names—beef rib roast, ribeye roast, or standing rib roast (so called when it is bone-in and can be roasted without the meat touching the pan)—but regardless of what it is called, it **comes from the 6th through 12th ribs of a steer**, sandwiched between the chuck and the short loin. It is primarily composed of the *longissimus dorsi* muscle that runs next to the spine. Prime rib is primarily prized for two characteristics...

TENDERNESS—Because of its location high up on the back of the steer, this muscle is not well used. This lack of use means that this muscle develops to be much more tender than, say, the rear-leg muscles (the Round of beef): **it is anatomically predisposed to tenderness.**

MARBLING—Perhaps the most notable feature of this cut is the deep, **rich fat marbling**. The “eye” of the rib is encircled by a ring of fat and connective tissue, outside of which lies the “lip” of the roast. Much of the whole roast is covered by a fat cap of varying thickness. It is those seams of fat that deliver rich flavor and a velvety texture, as well as keep the meat from drying out easily.



How to Select the Best Prime Rib

You may have heard that Prime Rib refers to a prime-grade rib roast. This is *not* true (at least, not necessarily). As mentioned above, the term “Prime Rib” refers to the prime section of the rib cage on the cow (the 6th through the 12th ribs).

Prime rib *can* be graded USDA Prime, but it can also be USDA Choice or USDA Select. At some butchers, “ungraded” meat cuts are also available. So, when it comes to selection a Prime Rib at the store...

- **Buy the highest grade you can on your budget.** If you can afford Prime grade, go for it! But **Choice is generally a good intersection of quality and affordability.**
- As for size, **figure about 1/2 pound of raw roast per person** on a boneless roast, or one bone per two people on a bone-in roast.

QUICK TIP



It's a little known fact, but the method of grading beef by the USDA as **Prime, Choice, or Select is solely based on fat marbling**. The more thoroughly marbled the beef, the higher the grade. Higher graded beef will be juicier, more tender, and more flavorful, but it will also cost significantly more.

Preparing YOUR PRIME RIB



Preparation at a Glance

Selection: Buy the highest grade meat you can afford, but Choice grade works great. Plan on 1/2 a pound per guest.

Trimming: Whether your roast is bone on or boneless, trim off any excess gristle or fat. You want as close to a round, aerodynamic shape as possible with a fat cap that is ¼ inch thick at the very most.

Tying: Increase the aerodynamics and evenness of your prime rib by tying it with string in between each bone or, if boneless, every inch or so.

Seasoning: Generously apply your favorite seasoning to all sides. We love just kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper.

Chilling: Prepare your prime rib for searing by putting your tied prime rib into the freezer until it measures **30°F** (-1°C) just below the surface.

■ Bone In or Boneless?

STANDING RIB ROASTS, which can be as short as two bones or as long as the full seven, is **beautiful to behold, but more difficult to trim and carve** (you will probably just cut the bones off to serve it anyway). It is **also typically more expensive**—cheaper per pound, but you will be paying for bone weight, which you can't eat.

BONELESS PRIME RIB ROASTS are **easier to cook and easier to carve**. They cost more per pound but you're not paying for bones. The choice is yours, but in the ThermoWorks kitchen, we most often cook boneless roasts, unless we need bones for a beef stock.

QUICK TIP

If you choose to get a bone-in roast, we recommend having your butcher **prepare it "cut and tied,"** with the bones cut off and then tied back onto the muscle. This creates an easy carving situation while maintaining the impressive presentation.



■ Trimming

1

Trim off any gristle and silver skin on the surface. (There is also often silver skin deeper in the fat, but leave that alone.)

2

Trim excess fat. A nice fat cap can enhance the mouthfeel of the Prime Rib but you don't want more than 1/4 inch of thickness.

3

If you DO go boneless, you have the option to **trim off the flat part that extends away from the main muscle**, called the “tail.” This increases the aerodynamic shape of the roast which will help it cook more evenly.



■ Tying

Tie your roast to create a more uniform shape and density along its length with three benefits:

1. More even cooking, with **less chance of a gray ring around the inside edge** of your holiday-table centerpiece.
2. A more even surface, allowing for **better browning in the sear phase**.
3. A better-looking finished product that is **easier to slice**.



QUICK TIP

If you have a bone-in roast, tie between each of the bones and across the length of the roast. If you have a boneless roast, space your string every inch or so. **Tie the strings taught** to hold the roast as compact as possible.

STEP BY STEP



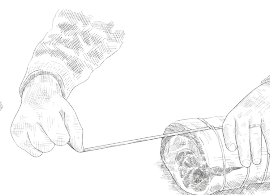
Slide butcher's twine under the roast and tie a square knot on top. Pull the two ends of the twine away from each other to make a slip knot and tighten against the roast.



Twist a loop with about 8 inches of uncut twine and pass it under the roast again as shown. Make sure the loose end of the twine is on the bottom of the loop.



Slide the loop about two inches away from the initial tie and tighten against the roast. Repeat this process as needed until you reach the end of the roast.



Draw a length of twine across the end of the roast as shown. Flip the roast over to pull the twine tight across the full length of the roast. Flip the roast back over.



Tie the loose twine to the cut end of the original knot with a new square knot. Pull the two ends of the twine away from each other slip the final knot tight against the roast.

■ Seasoning

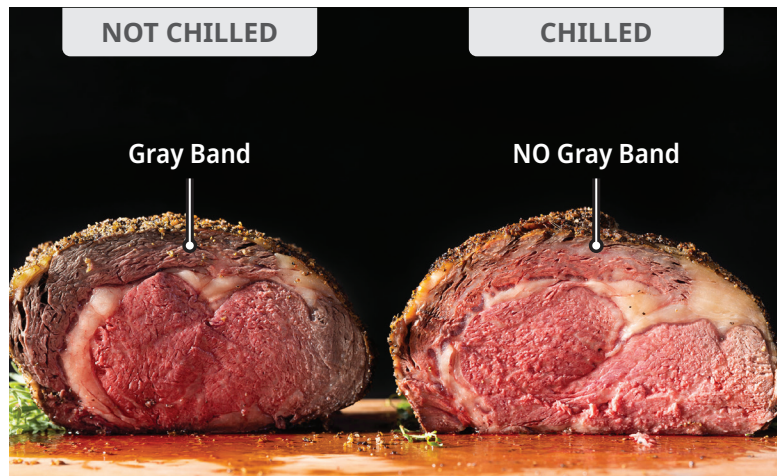
Prime rib doesn't need a lot to dress it up, and will, in fact, do swimmingly with nothing but salt and pepper. You may be tempted to put all kinds of powerful spice rubs on your rib roast, especially if you are smoking the meat. But, this premium cut of **beef really shines with the classic flavors of salt and pepper...**

1. **Salt every surface** well with Kosher salt. Don't neglect the sides.
2. Allow the salt to penetrate the surface for 5 minutes.
3. Then **apply freshly ground pepper** to all surfaces. Look for about a 2 to 1 ratio, salt to pepper.



■ Pre-Rest Your Prime Rib

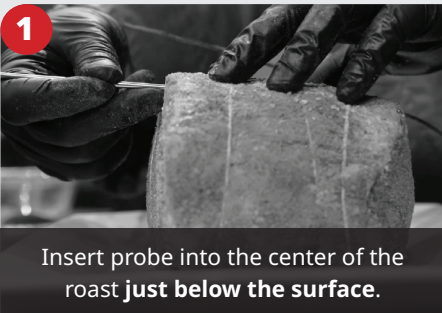
Perhaps nothing shows the difference in quality between a properly cooked Prime Rib and an amateur effort than the tell-tale gray band of overcooked beef near the seared surface. Search Prime Rib on the internet and even in professional photos, you will see thick gray bands. **One key to avoiding the gray band is chilling or "pre-resting" your roast in the freezer** to create a thermal barrier to overcooking the interior meat while you sear the surface.



PRE-RESTING IN THE FREEZER

After seasoning the roast, place it unwrapped on a tray in the freezer until the outside 1/4" reaches **30°F** (-1°C). Note that this step will add about 45 minutes to an hour to your prep time, so plan accordingly.

STEP BY STEP



Cooking YOUR PRIME RIB



Cooking at a Glance

Searing: Straight from the freezer, sear your prime rib in a piping hot skillet (cast iron if you've got one) with a surface temp of at least **400°F** (204°C). Sear 2 ½ minutes per side until a dark brown crust forms all around. Don't neglect the ends of the roast.

Roasting (or smoking): Pre-heat your oven or smoker to **225°F** (107°C). Place your seared prime rib on a rack on a shallow baking sheet to allow air to circulate below the meat.

Verifying Doneness: Cook your Prime Rib until the lowest internal temperature you can find with an instant-read thermometer is **125°F** (52°C) for medium rare or **130°F** (55°C) for medium doneness.

Resting: Remove the roast from the oven. Loosely tent with foil and let it rest on the counter for 30 minutes. During this time the lowest internal temperature should rise to between **130** and **134°F** (55–57°C) for medium rare or to between **135** and **140°F** (58–60°C) for medium.

Carving: Carve to desired thickness.

■ Searing

Searing is one of the most critical parts of roasting a prime rib. Searing the roast first will kill the surface bacteria, which is helpful, especially when you are roasting at lower temperatures. Even more, **searing produces Maillard-reaction browning all over the roast**, resulting in a nice, savory crisp-meat crust.



TO SEAR YOUR ROAST...

1. **Preheat a cast iron skillet to 500°F** (260°C) as measured with an infrared thermometer.
2. Take your roast out of the freezer and remove the probes.
3. **Sear the cold roast on all sides, giving each surface about 2 ½ minutes** against the pan, resulting in a “nicely browned” exterior.



■ How to Cook Your Prime Rib

DIRECTLY AFTER SEARING YOUR ROAST...

1. While you sear your roast, **preheat your oven or smoker to 225°F (107°C)**.
2. Place the **probe tip of your alarm thermometer as near the physical center** of the roast as you can.
3. Set the target **high temperature alarm to 125°F (52°C)** for a perfectly pink medium-rare doneness, or **130°F (54°C)** for medium.
4. **Place the roast on a shallow baking tray** to allow the hot air of the oven to circulate around as much of the roast as possible while it cooks.
5. Roast or smoke until the alarm sounds.

Because a prime rib Roast is such a large cut of meat, it will **experience fairly significant Carryover Cooking** (from 5–8°F [2–4°C] depending upon the size of the roast) while it rests. Your serving temperature should end up being around **130–134°F (55–57°C)** for medium rare, or **135–144°F (58–62°C)** for medium doneness.

■ Know When Your Prime Rib is Done

Using a leave-in probe alarm thermometer like ChefAlarm® with a High Alarm temperature setting is important for making sure you don't accidentally overshoot your target doneness temperature, but unless the probe tip is placed exactly in the thermal center of the meat there may be lower doneness temperatures elsewhere in the roast.

That's why it's important to also **verify the doneness of the roast in several places with a fast and accurate instant-read thermometer like ThermoWorks® ONE** before removing the roast from the oven.

WHEN YOUR CHEFALARM SOUNDS...

1. Insert your instant-read probe deep into the meat and pull it up slowly through the roast. **Look for the lowest temperature you see.** Meat is only as done as its least-done part!
2. If you find a lower temperature than the one displayed on your alarm thermometer, **move the leave-in probe to the cooler spot until the temperature displayed matches the lowest internal temp** you saw on your instant-read and continue cooking.
3. If you don't find any lower temps, **remove the roast from the oven** and move on to the resting stage.
4. Loosely tent with foil and let it rest on the counter for 30 minutes.
5. Carve to desired thickness and enjoy!

KEY TEMPS

225°F (107°C)

Preheat your oven or smoker

125°F (52°C)

High Alarm temp for your alarm thermometer

130–134°F (55–57°C)

Final serving temperature



RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS

**Industrial IR with Circle Laser**

12:1 optics for distance, full-circle laser targeting for accuracy, backlit display, adjustable emissivity, range to 1022°F, and Type K probe port.

**Thermapen ONE**

With full readings in ONE second or less, Thermapen ONE approaches the speed of thought, allowing you to focus on the quality of your work.

**ChefAlarm**

With both high and low alarms, min and max temp display, and a timer built right in, ChefAlarm is the most versatile temperature tracker for the home cook.



How to Cook the Perfect Prime Rib Roast

Prep Time: 2 hours

Cook Time: 3 hours

Total Time: 5 hours

Ingredients

- 1 prime rib, size determined by need
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

- Trim your rib how you like it best.
- Generously season the roast with salt and pepper or any other seasonings you prefer.
- Insert a probe from an alarm thermometer, like ChefAlarm, near the edge of the roast. Set the Low Alarm to **30°F (-1°C)** and place the roast in the freezer.
- Meanwhile, preheat your oven to **225°F (107°C)**.
- When the Low Alarm sounds, remove your roast from the freezer.
- Heat a heavy skillet (cast iron is preferred) over high heat.
- When the skillet reaches at least **450°F (232°C)** as measured with an infrared thermometer like IRK-2, sear the roast well on all sides.
- Place the roast on a rack set into a rimmed baking sheet. Insert the alarm thermometer probe into the very center of the roast and set the High Alarm to **125°F (52°C)**.
- Cook the roast in the oven until the High Alarm sounds. Verify that there are no lower temperatures in the meat with a fast and accurate instant-read thermometer like Thermapen® ONE.
- Remove the roast from your oven and let it rest for 30 minutes, lightly tented with foil.
- Carve and serve!



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