REVERSE-SEAR · MEDIUM

Rabbit al Ajillo on the Kamado, Butterflied and Reverse-Seared

Farmed rabbit, butterflied, cooked indirect at 140 °C over a half-moon deflector and finished on cast iron with garlic and rosemary oil. Two zones at once in a 46 cm kamado, with nothing to move while it is hot.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
30 min	55 min	4	140 °C

Ingredients

- **1 ud** whole farmed rabbit, 1.3-1.5 kg, head removed
- **100 ml** extra virgin olive oil
- **2 ud** sprigs of fresh rosemary
- **1 cdta** sweet pimentón de la Vera (smoked Spanish paprika)
- **1 ud** lemon
- **15 g** coarse salt
- **6 ud** garlic cloves, sliced
- **2 ud** sprigs of fresh thyme
- **1 cdta** freshly ground black pepper
- **1 puñado** fresh parsley, chopped

Method

1 BUTTERFLY THE RABBIT

Lay the rabbit on its back. With the Arcos 2900 curved boning knife, cut along the belly down the breastbone and carry on through the rib cartilage as far as the front legs. Open it out with your hands and press the backbone with your palm until it gives and the piece lies flat. Cut a centimetre into the joint where each thigh meets the hip, without detaching them, so they open out. Remove the kidneys, liver and loose fat, and set them aside.

2 DRY-SALT

Pat the piece dry with kitchen paper and spread the 15 g of coarse salt over both sides, a little more on the thighs. Set it on a rack with a tray underneath and leave it uncovered in the fridge for 2 hours, or up to 12 if you have the time. The salt works into the meat, the surface dries and browns better on the iron. Take it out 30 minutes before cooking.

3 CONFIT THE GARLIC OIL

Put the sliced garlic in a small saucepan with the 100 ml of oil, two sprigs of rosemary and the thyme. Lowest heat for 10-12 minutes: the garlic should soften without taking colour; if it sizzles, the heat is too high. Take it off, add the pimentón and the pepper away from the heat and leave to infuse. This oil is used at the end of the sear, never during the indirect phase.

4 SET UP TWO ZONES AND LIGHT

Load the Konnected Joe with the Jealous Devil quebracho banked towards the right half of the firebox. On the half-moon rack, place the half-moon deflector on the left at the lower level with a grate above it; on the right, no deflector, the half-moon cast-iron grate at the lower level. Light over the right half, close the dome and settle at 140 °C with the fan from the control panel or with the bottom vent open a finger's width.

5 INDIRECT WITH TWO PROBES

Push one Inkbird IBT-4XS probe into the centre of the thickest thigh, clear of bone, and another into the loin, next to the backbone. Lay the butterflied rabbit bone side down on the grate over the deflector half, thighs facing the centre of the kamado, which is the hottest part of that zone. Close it and leave it alone: at 140 °C the thigh takes 35 to 45 minutes to reach 60-62 °C.

6 STOKE THE DIRECT HALF

When the thigh reads 60-62 °C, lift the rabbit onto a tray with the probes still in: over the next few minutes thigh and loin even out instead of climbing further. Open the bottom and top vents fully, or raise the panel setpoint to 220 °C, and wait 5-8 minutes: the coals on the right half flare back up and the cast iron heats through. To open the dome again over live coals, burp it: open five centimetres, wait about five seconds and open fully. Never leave the lid ajar.

7 SEAR WITH THE GARLIC OIL

Move the rabbit onto the cast-iron grate, meat side down, and close the dome. Give it 3-4 minutes a side, turning once. In the last minute on each side, brush with the garlic oil without drenching it; if it drips and flares, close the dome and wait a few seconds. The loin reaches 70-72 °C before the thighs: if it gets well ahead, lift the piece onto a board, cut it just in front of the hips with the boning knife and return only the thighs to the iron; ribs and loin wait on the platter.

8 REST AND SERVE

Pull the thighs when they read 70-72 °C and move everything to a warm platter. Rest for 5 minutes uncovered so the crust does not soften. Meanwhile, the liver and kidneys get 2 minutes on the iron with a drop of the oil. Portion with the boning knife: thighs, loin in two, rib section. Spoon over the rest of the oil with its confited garlic, the juice of half a lemon and the parsley.

Editor's tips

- Ask your butcher for a farmed rabbit of 1.3-1.5 kg: any smaller and the loin is so thin it overcooks before the thigh reaches 60 °C; any larger and the butterflied piece will not fit on one half-moon of a 46 cm kamado without straying onto the direct side.
- If during the indirect phase the loin runs more than 8 °C ahead of the thigh, lay a piece of foil loosely over it, not wrapped: it slows the radiant heat on the thin part and leaves the rest of the piece as it is.
- The half-moon layout lets you cook a side dish at the same time: some peppers or spring onions on the indirect-side grate while the rabbit sears on the iron, without opening the dome more often than necessary.
- A whole farmed rabbit needs no marinade beforehand and no soaking in milk: those are game recipes for masking the taste of a wild animal. Here the dry salt and the garlic oil at the end do all the work.

Gear for this recipe

Kamado Joe Konnected Joe

The Konnected Joe is Kamado Joe's 46 cm Classic with electric ignition and fan-driven temperature control from the panel. Two things count in this recipe: it comes as standard with the half-moon rack and its split deflector, which is what allows an indirect zone and a direct zone at the same time without removing anything while hot, and the fan holds the 140 °C of the long phase without adjusting the bottom vent by hand. For the sear it is enough to raise the setpoint and open the top vent. The 46 cm diameter takes a 1.3-1.5 kg rabbit butterflied on one half-moon; with a larger one the piece strays onto the direct side too soon.

mikamado.es/en/kamados/kamado-joe-konnected-joe

Jealous Devil 100% White Quebracho lump charcoal 15.8 kg

White quebracho is a very dense wood, and that density is the point here: a compact bed of coals that stays lit at 140 °C through the 35-45 minutes of indirect cooking without dying or running away, and that answers with radiant heat when the vents open for the sear. It produces little ash, which matters in a cook with the charcoal concentrated in half the basket, because ash building up under the direct half would choke the air intake just when it is needed. With the load banked to one side, a 46 cm kamado uses a small amount of the 15.8 kg bag per session.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/jealous-devil-quebracho-lump-charcoal

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Kamado Joe half-moon cast iron grate (Classic)

The Kamado Joe half-moon cast-iron grate is made for the Classic's half-moon rack, so it fits the gap the deflector leaves on the direct side without adapters. It is the piece that does the searing: cast iron stores more heat than a stainless steel grate and gives it back by contact, so the rabbit's lean meat browns in 3-4 minutes a side without needing longer, which is what dries it out. Placed on the lower level of the rack it sits closer to the coals and heats through during the 5-8 minutes of stoking. At the end, the liver and kidneys cook on the same surface.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/kamado-joe-half-moon-cast-iron-grate

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Inkbird IBT-4XS Bluetooth thermometer

The Inkbird IBT-4XS has four probes and a Bluetooth link to your phone, and two of them work here: one in the centre of the thigh and one in the loin, next to the backbone. It is what solves the underlying problem with roast rabbit, that its two parts do not finish together. The app shows both readings and alerts you when they hit the setpoint, first at the 60-62 °C that marks the move to the direct zone and then at the final 70-72 °C, without opening the dome to look. The two spare probes can go into the side dish on the indirect half or into a second rabbit if you are cooking for more people.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/inkbird-ibt-4xs

Arcos Series 2900 Curved Semi-Flexible Boning Knife 140 mm

Butterflying a rabbit is work for a thin, flexible blade, not a chef's knife: you have to follow the breastbone and the rib cartilage and then cut a centimetre into each hip joint without separating it. The curved semi-flexible boning knife from Arcos's 2900 series, with a 140 mm blade, follows the bone, gets into the joint and does not dig into the lean meat. When you are done it portions the rested piece into thighs, loin and rib section. It is a Spanish butcher's knife, with a stainless steel blade and a polypropylene handle, easy to keep sharp.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/arcos-2900-deshuesador-curvo-140

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/conejo-ajillo-reverse-sear-kamado

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