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## MEAT YOUR MATCH: HOW TO GET THE RIGHT CUT, EVERY TIME



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By **Erik R. Trinidad** | June 13, 2012

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It takes a certain kind of person to truly enjoy a well-prepared steak, but it takes a true epicurean to truly appreciate the craft behind preparing it. In fact, you can't really appreciate any cut of meat—be it burnt to a crisp or bloody as hell—until you understand the Art of Butchery.

"Contrary to popular perception, butchery is truly about appreciating the beauty of a carcass and fabricating it with precision," says Philip Mosner of Mosner Family Brands, a proud, family-run meat supplier to some of the country's most distinguished meat emporiums. With three generations' worth of experience, the Mosners really know their meat—especially how to cut and carve it out from carefully selected carcasses.

"Butchering is a true craft," Mosner says. "Every carcass is different and it takes a keen butcher to understand how to select the right piece of meat."

The ability to select the perfect piece of meat for a given recipe is an essential skill. "Everyone knows the basics," Mosner states. "For example, you look for marbling – those little flecks of fat within the muscle of the meat. Other than that, you want to look at the texture of the meat. [...] You want short, tight muscle fibers. Longer, loose muscle fibers are indicative of a chewier piece of meat. You also want to look at the color. You want a nice, bright, rosy color."

However, it's not just about color and texture; you can't just buy a pretty cut of meat, throw it in a marinade, and expect optimal results. Certain cuts of meat are better than others, depending on what you're preparing. For example, the chuck, neck, and shoulder are ideal for sauces since they allow liquids to seep in. And making special blends of different cuts of meat is an art in itself when trying to achieve the perfect burger patty.

Of course, one of the best things about acquiring an experienced butcher's wisdom is knowing how to select the perfect steak. "You want a steak to be at least one inch thick," Mosner says. "When a steak is too thin, it cooks through too quickly and the juices run out, making it dry. You're better off sharing a thicker steak than cooking two smaller ones."

As for the best cut of meat out there? "Everyone knows that the filet mignon is the most tender steak, but it's not the most flavorful. A lot of people will tell you they love a rib steak (prime rib), which is really delicious—especially where the cap encircles the eye—but my personal favorite is the porterhouse," Mosner says. "The porterhouse really is the best of both worlds. You've got the smaller eye, which is part of the filet mignon, and the bigger eye, which is an extension of the strip. It is absolute perfection."

Perfectionists of their craft, the Mosners truly know their meat. One could easily appreciate their work by simply **buying their products**, but Mosner Family Brands offers you the opportunity to learn with their **Art of Butchery classes**. As Mosner puts it, "Learning how to butcher and understanding cuts of meat gives you the knowledge and confidence to put out a meal that you know will eat well and be enjoyed by all."

*Erik Trinidad is an author, writer, designer, food critic, world traveler, and all-around "Freelance Renaissance Man," whose work can be seen on The Huffington Post, Food Network/Cooking Channel, and Discovery.com, as well as on his own travel and food sites, **The Global Trip** and **Fancy Fast Food**. Follow him on Twitter @theglobaltrip and @fancyfastfood; on facebook.com/theglobaltrip and facebook.com/fancyfastfood; youtube.com/theglobaltrip and youtube.com/fancyfastfood and at "theglobaltrip" on Instagram.*

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