

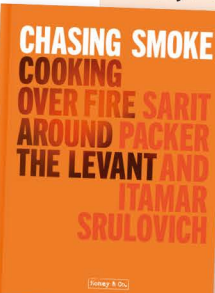
Change the way you barbecue

The problem with barbecuing – other than intemperate weather – is often scope. Do you stick with the tried, tested and beloved sausages and burgers, or start treating your grill like you would your oven, with panache, bravery and all manner of ingredients? And do you really have the fire skills to do the latter?

It's a conundrum, one that husband and wife restaurateur duo Sarit Packer and Itamar Srulovich – best known for their series of Honey & Co restaurants – may just help you resolve with their new book *Chasing Smoke*.

The book offers a major escape from the usual parade of burgers, sausages and grilled halloumi, but crucially retains the best of all BBQ sides such as a corn on the cob that involves an array of chilli butter, chive dressings and avocado accompaniments.

Chasing Smoke: Cooking over fire around the Levant by Sarit Packer and Itamar Srulovich, is published by Pavilion Books, £26



GRILLED WATERMELON AND PRAWNS WITH FETA AND CHILLI

Cooking the prawns with the shell on allows them to stay juicy and moist, while taking on the great smoky flavour from the BBQ. If you use pre-peeled prawns, they will only need a really fast flash on the grill, to avoid overcooking.

INGREDIENTS

(To serve 4 as a light lunch)

12 large prawns or 16 smaller ones, whole and with shell on

Half a small watermelon (or 2 thick slices of a large watermelon)

1 red chilli, sliced into rings

2tbsp red wine vinegar

Half tsp salt

250g sheeps' feta

A bunch of mint, leaves picked, half of them chopped, the rest left whole
3tbsp olive oil, plus a little more for brushing on the watermelon
1tsp roughly crushed black pepper



METHOD

1 Use a sharp serrated knife to score a slit down the back shell of each prawn, cutting through the flesh to reveal the digestive string. Remove it with the tip of the knife. Put the cleaned prawns in a bowl in the fridge until you are ready to cook

(once you start, you will only need 15 minutes to get this dish to the table). Cut the watermelon into eight large wedges, keeping the skin on. Mix the chilli slices with the vinegar and salt, and set aside while you build your BBQ to a high heat with lovely glowing embers.

2 Start by grilling the watermelon – simply brush the pieces with some olive oil and lay them flat on the hottest part of the grill for one to two minutes each side. You want to form black grid marks on the flesh, as this will intensify the flavour and

sweeten the fruit. Remove the melon to a side platter, then grill the prawns for three minutes on each side (two minutes for smaller ones) or until they turn bright pink.

3 Add the prawns to the watermelon, crumble the feta over them, and scatter with the whole picked mint leaves. Just before serving, stir the olive oil, black pepper and chopped mint into the marinating chilli and drizzle all over the platter. Serve immediately with a finger bowl and another bowl for shells.

4 To cook without a BBQ: Use a lightly oiled, preheated griddle pan on your stove and cook just as you would on the fire.

