

Steak au poivre (French pepper steak)

2 – 6 to 8 ounce ribeye or New York Strip steaks
2-4 tablespoons cracked black peppercorns
¼ cup heavy whipping cream
4 shallots finely diced
1 heaping tablespoon minced garlic
½ cup unsalted chicken stock
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
Salt and pepper to taste

NOTE: Ideally, prepare this in a cast iron skillet – if you don't have one, use a stainless steel skillet (don't use Teflon as the temperatures are high enough to cause the coating to break down)

PREPARE STEAKS: Remove steaks from refrigerator and allow to sit at room temperature for about 45 minutes. If steak is too cold, it will seize up when placed in the skillet and become very tough. Gently dry the steaks and then sprinkle a small, even amount of Coarse Kosher salt on both sides of each steak. Do the same with the cracked black peppercorns.

- 1) Place cast iron or stainless steel skillet in 500°F oven for 15-20 minutes
- 2) After heating, use kitchen towel to grab handle of skillet (will be hot enough for 3rd degree burns, so be CAREFUL!!!) and place on top of stove.
- 3) Over high heat, add enough avocado (or other neutral oil with a high smoke point) to just cover the bottom of the skillet.
- 4) With tongs, gently place the steak in the skillet AWAY FROM YOU.
- 5) Sear each side for 3-4 minutes.... Reduce heat and keep turning steaks until they reach an internal temperature of 130°F.
- 6) Remove steaks from skillet and place on a platter and cover loosely with aluminum foil to rest for 5-10 minutes (otherwise, cutting them immediately will cause the juices to all run out and make the steak dry)
- 7) Add the butter to the skillet and sauté the shallots just until golden.
- 8) Quickly add the minced garlic and sauté for 30-45 seconds.
- 9) Add the chicken stock and deglaze the skillet (releasing those delicious brown bits left on the bottom) stirring constantly with a wire whisk

- 10) Add the heavy cream and keep stirring until the sauce is reduced to about half the volume and very thick. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- 11) Either slice the steaks diagonally or serve whole. Gently spoon the peppercorn sauce over the steaks and serve.

ALTERNATE METHOD ON GAS OR CHARCOAL GRILL:

- Preheat the grill with the cast iron or stainless skillet on the grill to get it screaming hot (again NO TEFLON – over 400° will cause the Teflon coating to break down and release toxic fumes!!!!)
- Sear the steaks directly on the grill to create sear marks on both sides and then complete cooking in the skillet.