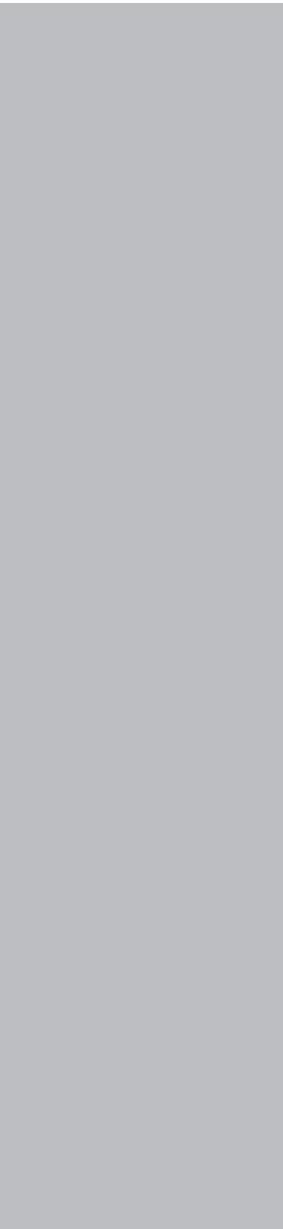


Not your basic barbecue

PURPLE PALM
CHEF NICK TALL
TELLS US HOW TO
CREATE THE ULTIMATE
SUMMER-FRESH
BACKYARD SUPPER.

Growing up in Miami, Nick Tall developed a culinary interest as a young child. "I would get really creative with crazy sandwich-making and French toast recipes, my parents tell me," Nick says. Later, he attended culinary school and served as a chef simultaneously before turning to the latter full time. "I thought, 'Why am I spending money on school when I'm already making good money doing what I love?'" Since then, he's cultivated diverse cooking skills from various cultures, moving around Asia before a stint in San Francisco and settling in the desert last winter. As head chef at Colony Palms' Purple Palm restaurant, Nick brings "innovative simplicity" with seasonal ingredients and a rotating menu that aims to please picky palates. When it comes to home cooking, he relies on many of the same techniques he explores at the restaurant, sourcing ingredients from farmers markets and local vendors. Here, Nick dishes on the art of the perfect summer barbecue.

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YOU ALSO BREW YOUR OWN BEER AT HOME. ARE THERE ANY PERFECT PAIRINGS?

Beer flavors and styles are so much more versatile than people realize. The flavor combinations of malts, hops and yeasts are limitless. There isn't really one type of beer I prefer with one type of food because of the incredible variations within each beer style. These days, an IPA can be any color from light golden to black. An amber ale can be sweet and malty or hoppy and bitter, or both. I do suggest pairing food with lighter flavors, such as fish, with lighter colored beers; and stronger flavored dishes, such as red meat, with darker beers.

SAVOR » CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

YOUR HOME-BARBECUING PHILOSOPHY:

Keep it simple and fun. Don't rush. Make sure there is music playing and that you have something great to drink. Make it not feel like work.

YOU LIKE TO SMOKE MEATS AND FISH ON DIFFERENT VARIETIES OF WOOD. WHAT FLAVOR DOES EACH LEND?

I like to use hickory for its rich flavor, applewood for its fruitiness and almonwood for nutty sweetness. All are good multipurpose woods that can be great for lending unique flavors for meat, fish and vegetables. I have a big orange tree in my back yard and one of the limbs died — I sawed it off and let it dry in the sun, and then used it to smoke some salmon. It was amazing! You could really taste the sweet and tangy flavor of the citrus wood in the fish.

TASTE THE RAINBOW:

Depending on the time of year, I'll grill different vegetables as a side dish. Zucchini and eggplant are great to grill in the summer. Pumpkin and winter squash like butternut are my favorites in the cooler months. I love grilled cruciferous vegetables tossed with sautéed garlic and chilies.



"KEEP IT SIMPLE AND FUN. DON'T RUSH. MAKE IT NOT FEEL LIKE WORK."

Chef Nick Tall,
Head chef at Colony
Palms' Purple Palm
restaurant

slow-cook pork and a lot of different vegetables. I also love raw seafood preparations like ceviche, which I change every time I make it. I also make my own pickles and kimchi.

WHAT'S FOR DESSERT?

My favorite dessert is just a simple, soft-baked chocolate-chip cookie. A good one never disappoints.

YOUR TOP-CHOICE ITEM ON THE PURPLE PALMS MENU?

My Twelve-Hour Pork Short Ribs; I love everything about this dish, but I would never make it at home — it's way too much work! ¶

— Ashley Breeding