

HOW TO USE A Kamado Grill & Smoker

WHAT IS A KAMADO GRILL?

- An egg-shaped grill and smoker originates in Japan. The word 'Kamado' means 'stove' in Japanese and is used to refer to a "place for the cauldron."
- The Best kamados are made of ceramics, this makes them very heavy, and a bit fragile, but also retain and radiate heat with amazing efficiency.
- They have a charcoal fire base, and a vent top and bottom. Heat and smoke are drawn up through the chamber towards the top vent. The ceramic material absorbs and radiates heat for incredible even, all-over cooking.

DIFFERENT WAYS YOU CAN COOK

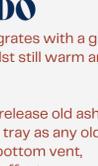
Capable of both low and very high heat, from less than 200 °F to over 750 °F, makes them very flexible



High Direct heat, for standard grilling

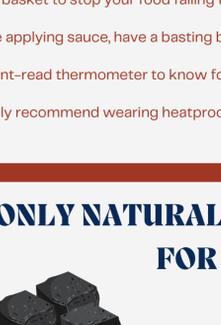


Low to medium heat for roasting, smoking and baking.



High direct heat for baking pizza

BEFORE YOU START, PLAN YOUR COOK, AND READY YOUR KAMADO



ALWAYS START WITH A CLEAN KAMADO

- Try to scrape your grates with a grill brush after use whilst still warm and easier to clean
- Stir up the coals to release old ash, then empty the ash tray as any old ash can choke the bottom vent, restrict airflow and affect temperature stability.
- If you didn't clean grates after last cook, warm the Kamado and then clean them now.

HAVE THE CORRECT TOOLS READY

You don't want to be caught without the necessary tools. Time spent searching for gear is a chance for food to be left and overcook. What should you have?

- Tongs and spatula, for flipping to repositioning food.
- If you're planning on grilling smaller morsels, like scallops, asparagus and the like, consider skewers or a grill basket to stop your food falling through the grates
- If you're applying sauce, have a basting brush or mop ready to roll
- An instant-read thermometer to know food is cooked to the correct internal temp.
- We highly recommend wearing heatproof gloves.

ONLY NATURAL LUMPWOOD CHARCOAL FOR FUEL – WHY?



PRO'S

- More natural, burns clean, no additives
- Leaves little ash, does not block fire grate and easier clean up
- Easier to light than briquettes
- Burns hotter

CON'S

- Irregularly (naturally) shaped means it doesn't always burn evenly
- Burns hotter, therefore quicker, less time between refilling
- Burns quicker, therefore, costs more



PRO'S

- Consistent shape so burns very evenly
- Burns at a lower temp, so burns for longer
- Burns slower so needs refilling less often

CON'S

- Less 'natural' containing additives to keep their shape and burn more evenly
- Leaves more ash, can block fire grate in a Kamado messing with airflow and temps
- Harder to light than lumpwood
- Does not impart much flavour to food

HOW MUCH CHARCOAL SHOULD YOU USE?

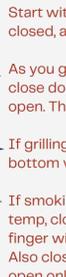


- Begin with a wide base and mound up your fuel until it forms a peak
- Start with larger pieces at the bottom of the pile to prevent holes in the fire grate from becoming blocked
- The base should be wide enough to fill the firebox, and deep enough to reach up to just below the holes in your Kamado's fire ring.



- The top of the peak will be level with the top of the firebox
- Once the base is set, it doesn't matter so much what size pieces you use to complete the pile. Just try to have a variety of sizes, so there's lots of pieces touching and few large gaps

LIGHTING CHARCOAL IN A KAMADO



Controlling the flow of air into and out of your Kamado is key to adjusting the temperature. Before starting, open the bottom vent all the way and leave the lid open to get your charcoal burning.

Then, there are lots of ways you can light your charcoal. We recommend one of these three ways for most efficient and safest start-up;

- Looflighter or electric start
- Pyramid method
- Chimney start

DO NOT USE LIGHTER FLUID

After about 10 minutes of lighting your coals, close the lid, but fully open the top vent, in general, you should start closing your vents when you're about 50F (28C) below your target.

HITTING TARGET TEMPS

- Start with bottom vent fully open, top vent closed, and daisy wheel fully open.
- As you get to within 50F of target temp, close down the top daisy wheel to 1/2 open. The temp will still rise.
- If grilling, roasting or baking, always leave bottom vent wide open.
- If smoking, when it gets to within 25F of temp, close down the bottom vent to a finger width or just less than 2 inches open. Also close down the daisy when to 1/4 open only.
- Now make final adjustments: if temp is too low, open top daisy wheel more, if temp is too high, close it some. Adjusting the top vent 1/8th either way can change temp 15F to 25F
- Temp changes due to vents opening or closing take up to 15 minutes to take effect. So adjust, and then wait.
- It's going to take 30 to 45 minutes or thereabouts to get your Kamado to the right temp, and to stabilise before you cook.

DO NOT OVERSHOOT TEMPERATURE

- Kamados work so well because they are extremely well insulated, they hold their temperature well.
- This is a good thing, but does have one downside: if you overshoot your target temperature, it's far from easy to bring it back down.
- So what's the solution?
- Ease your way up to the right temperature slowly and patiently; don't just let 'er rip and think you're going to cap it off when you get where you want to be.
- REMEMBER: slow and steady and hold. If you level off a bit low, it's a piece of cake to kick it up a few degrees, but it is a royal pain to shave a few off.

HOW TO SET UP A KAMADO TO COOK DIFFERENT WAYS?

GRILLING

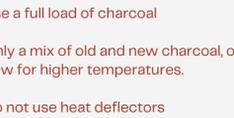
- Use a full load of charcoal
- Only a mix of old and new charcoal, or all new for higher temperatures.
- For a 2-zone cooking, use one deflector plate and half grate on the upper lever for cool zone, and half grate right above coals on the lower level for high heat.
- For pure high heat heat grilling, use no deflector plate and one half grate on each or upper and lower levels for two high temps for grilling.
- Target temp: 400F – 600F (204C – 316C)
- Open both top and bottom vents fully; close top vent halfway to hold target and adjust as necessary.
- Lid closed for opening temperature, but you can leave it open for short grilling sessions.

SMOKING

- Use a full load of NEW charcoal only
- Place heat deflectors above fire ring for full indirect cooking.
- Place grate on rack above deflector.
- Place drip pan below grate (optional)
- A water pan is NOT required but can be optionally added
- Target temp: 225F – 275F (149C – 232C)
- Open bottom vent 2"
- Close top vent and fully open daisy wheel (if applicable); adjust the wheel to raise/lower temperature
- Lid closed
- Use a few chunks of smoking wood, added at the beginning.

BAKING

- Use a full load of charcoal – mixed new and old charcoal is acceptable
- Place heat deflectors on top of grates in the top position
- Place pizza stone on the heat deflector
- Target temp 300F – 450F (149C – 232C) for baking 500F+ (260C+) for pizza
- Open top and bottom vents halfway until nearing the target, then adjust accordingly
- Preheat pizza stone for 10 minutes
- Lid closed
- Smoking wood not recommended



SEARING

- Use a full load of charcoal
- Only a mix of old and new charcoal, or all new for higher temperatures.
- Do not use heat deflectors
- Place grate on the rack above the fire ring
- Target temp 500F – 705F (260C – 399C)
- Leave the lid open for the first 10 minutes
- Open both top and bottom vents fully; close top vent slightly to hold target and adjust as necessary
- Lid closed, but don't leave food on too long at high temperatures.

ROASTING

- Use a full load of charcoal – mixed new and old charcoal is acceptable
- Place heat deflectors above the fire ring for full indirect cooking.
- Place grate on the rack above the deflector
- Place drip pan below grate (optional)
- Target temp 300F – 450F (149C – 232C)
- Open top and bottom vents halfway until nearing the target, then adjust accordingly
- Lid closed
- Use a small amount of smoking wood if desired



SMOKING WOOD



Once our Kamado has reached target temp, only now should you add smoking wood and your grates

Wait until the thick, white smoke stops being produced before adding your meat to the grill and starting cooking.



SAFETY WARNING – BURP YOUR GRILL WHEN OPENING



There can be dangerous flashback of heat and flame leading out of the front of a Kamado when you open the lid, due to the rush of oxygen entering.

To prevent this, partially open lid a couple of inches and hold it there for 10 seconds, allowing oxygen to enter slowly and heat to escape, before opening fully.

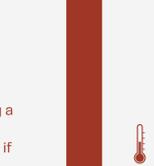


OIL THE GRATES BEFORE ADDING FOOD

Don't forget this step before adding food to help prevent it from sticking to the grates.

FINALLY ADD YOUR FOOD

You should now be ready to cook, so go ahead and add your food.

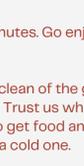


MONITORING THE TEMPERATURE

- A Kamado is very good at holding a temperature, and you still need to monitor it, but you adjustments if needed. Stable temp is one of the most important factors in a successful cook.
- The thermometer in the lid cannot be relied upon, they are neither particularly accurate nor well placed to tell you what's going on with your food.
- Food is down on the grate, but the thermometer is reading the temp up at the top of the lid. They will not be the same.
- Purchase and use a third party thermometer, with a probe to measure temps at the grate where the food is cooking, this is what matters.
- Even better, use a multi-probe digital thermometer so you can monitor the internal temperature of whatever food you're cooking too

WHEN IS FOOD DONE? COOK TO TEMP & FEEL, NOT TIME

- It's great to have an idea of how long you plan to cook meat for, but the ONLY way to know for certain if your food is done is by the internal temperature.
- Touch--test and visual cues are limited in scope and often result in underdone or overdone meat.
- Only an instant read thermometer can tell you if your steak, chicken or brisket is fully and safely cooked, and at a perfect temperature.
- As good as you think you might be at "knowing" when your meat is ready, we implore you to use a thermometer



BE MINDFUL OF CARRYOVER COOKING

- 'Carryover cooking' is when food continues to cook even when removed from the grill
- The outer layer of meat is hotter than the inside, and while resting, the temp gradient evens out, cooking the insides further until the whole piece of meat is the same temp.
- To avoid the tragedy of your meat becoming over done, you must take your meat out before your meat hits the right temperature. It will then rise to the correct temperature when resting
- Smaller items like steak or chicken breast, wait until they're 5F (2C) below target and let them rest until they're ready.
- For big cuts and whole muscle, pull them out when they are 10F (4C) under target before resting.

CLOSING DOWN THE KAMADO WHEN COOKING IS FINISHED

- First, close the bottom vent to cut off the supply of oxygen and snuff out the coals
- leave the top vent open just 1/8th of the way, to allow smoke and heat to find their way out.
- Wait 30-45 minutes. Go enjoy your meal and company.
- Come back to clean of the grates while they're still hot. Trust us when we tell you it is FAR easier to get food and grease off a hot grate than a cold one.
- Once that's done, shut both the upper and over vents, leaving just a minuscule crack open at each spot. This allows air to continue to flow through and inhibit mold and mildew growth.