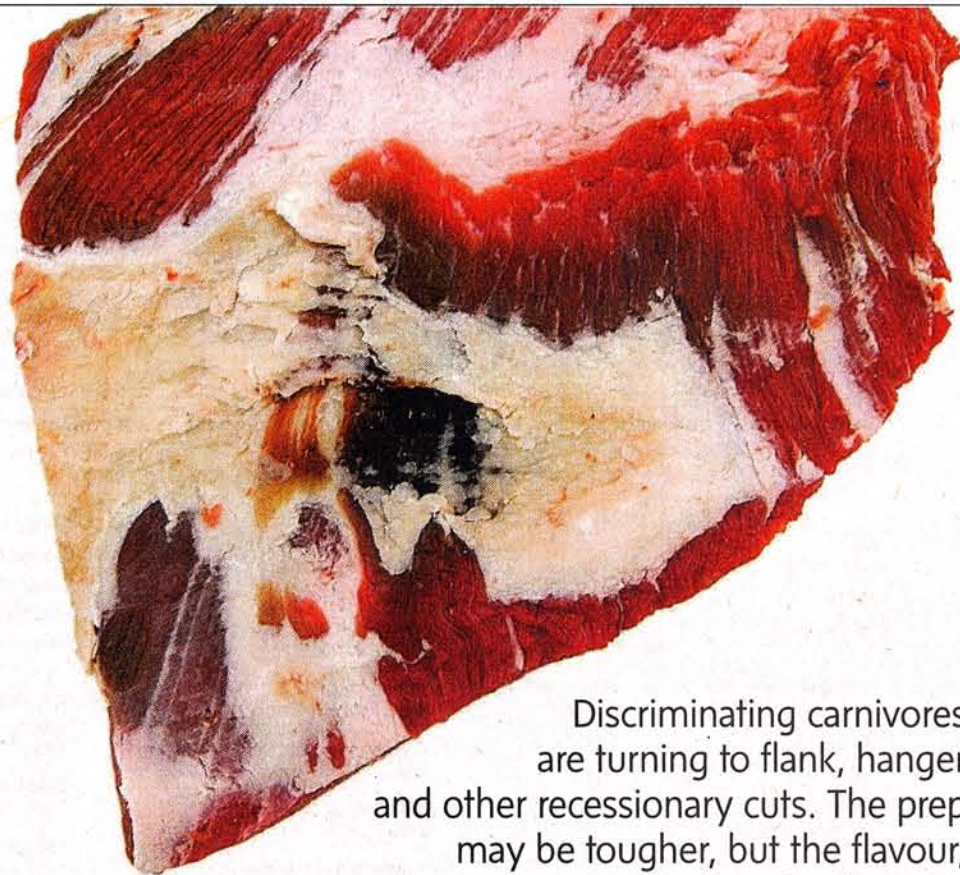




SECTION L WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2009

Globe Life

GRILL SEASON » CHEAP CUTS



Discriminating carnivores are turning to flank, hanger and other recessionary cuts. The prep may be tougher, but the flavour, many say, is meatier. **Rob Mifsud** reports

Farewell, tenderloin

Until January, Paul Bradshaw of Toronto's Healthy Butcher could reliably predict when he'd run out of his choicer cuts of beef.

"New York striploin, beef tenderloin and rib-eyes, the three more popular cuts - most weeks we would be running out Thursday afternoon, Friday morning,"

Mr. Bradshaw says.

But it's been a different story over the past few months.

"They're stretching till Sunday, and it's cuts like brisket and blade and flatiron that we're running out of Thursday and Friday, which are the cheaper cuts."

Meet the new heroes of the recessionary grill.

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The new heroes of the recessionary grill are humbler cuts of meat such as brisket (above), hanger and flank that can be just as tasty as the luxe varieties. **LAURA LEYSHON** FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

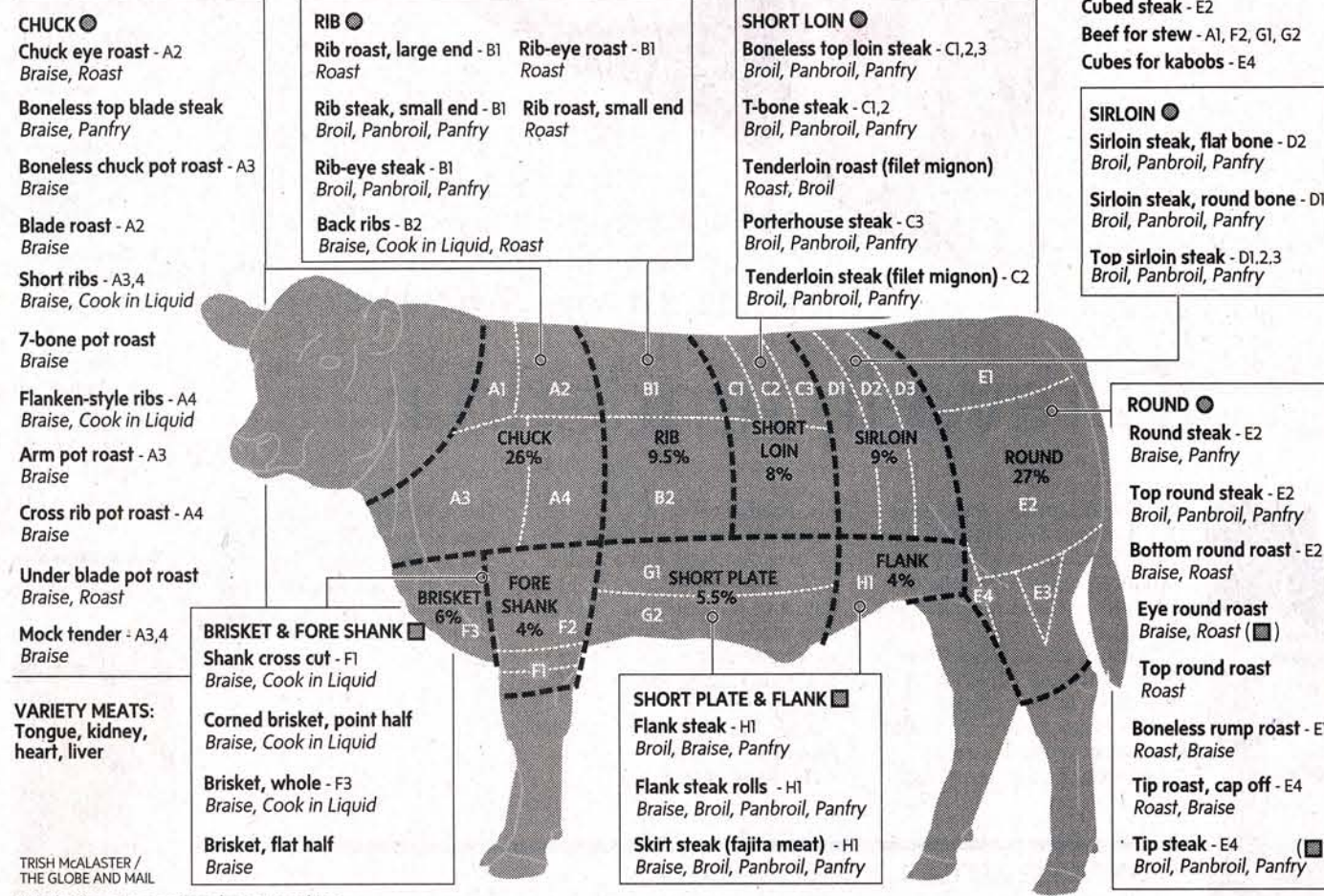
"Moreover, the craft of the butcher becomes that much more important. Breaking down carcasses is an art, so the sharp blade and savvy recommendations of a skilled butcher matter now more than ever before."

The recessionary grill

How do you tell a hanger from a flank? More importantly, how do you cook them? We asked butchers Paul Bradshaw of the Healthy Butcher (HB) and Steve Alexander of Umbrae's (C) for their suggestions on preparing less expensive cuts.

	Cooking method	Seasoning/Sauce
FLATIRON - Comes from the chuck, on top of the shoulder blade. Stronger beef flavour, relatively tender, but must be butchered to remove sinew. (\$14.00/lb- \$16.99/lb)	HB Sear on high, then cook to temp on low C Sear on high, then cook to med-rare. Rest before serving.	Salt and pepper (S & P) S & P, brush with a little olive oil
HANGER - Comes from the diaphragm, medium tenderness. Has strong "iron" flavour, sometimes almost imperceptible liver taste mixed with great beefiness. (\$14.00/lb- \$18.99/lb)	HB Indirect grill heat C Sear on high, then cook to med-rare. Rest before serving.	S & P, thyme, garlic rub S & P, serve with chimichurri
FLANK - Most tender, comes from the loin section closer to the rear of the cow. Decadent beef flavour. (\$14.00/lb- \$17.99/lb)	HB Grill on low heat C Sear on high, then cook to med-rare. Rest before serving.	Dijon mustard rub S & P, serve with chimichurri
BAVETTE - (aka Vacio) Very juicy cut, decent marbling with beefiest flavour. Also comes from the loin. (\$14.00/lb- \$16.99/lb)	HB Grill on high heat C Sear on high, then cook to med-rare (indirect heat). Rest before serving.	S & P or marinade S & P with salsa verde or chimichurri
ONGLET - Similar to hanger steak, by its French name (\$14.00/lb- \$16.99/lb)	HB Start on high, then lower to cook to med-rare. C Sear on high, then cook to med-rare. Rest before serving.	S & P S & P with salsa verde or chimichurri
SKIRT - Quite tender, abundant marbling, with rich beef flavour. Comes from the rib, but overlaps into the loin. (\$14.00/lb- \$17.99/lb)	HB Sear on high for 1,1/2 to 2 minutes per side C Sear on high, then cook to med-rare. Rest before serving.	S & P and garlic S & P

WHERE THE CUTS COME FROM



ing to medium-rare. Laura Manes, a consultant in Toronto, grew up savouring "the more pure meat flavour" of the many offcuts that form the backbone of her parents' native Argentine cuisine. One of her favourite offcuts, known as *entraña* in Argentina but commonly referred to as the outside skirt in Canada, is the focus of *entrañourage* parties she and her husband Ethan Manes throw, at which 50 or more guests feast on kilos of grilled *entraña* and chorizo sausage from her favourite Argentine-style butcher, Macelleria del Baby Beef. Their recipe is simple: trim off the meat's silver skin and season heavily with sea salt for half an hour before cooking. Grill it for eight to 12 minutes,

flipping once, over medium-high heat until medium-rare. After letting it rest, slice the *entraña* thinly and serve it with a classic chimichurri, an Argentine sauce for grilled meats typically made with parsley, garlic, oil and vinegar. Converts to offcuts are good news for butchers during tough economic times. Retailers like Mr. Bradshaw, who buy and butcher whole carcasses, no longer have to find creative ways to sell offcuts. Mr. Bradshaw has even noticed a spike in sales of the one set of cuts that almost never sells: organ meats. Moreover, the craft of the butcher becomes that much more important. Breaking down carcasses is an art, so the sharp blade and savvy recommenda-

tions of a skilled butcher matter more than ever before. Though home cooks have only just started shifting their spending, restaurant chefs made the switch months earlier. Mr. Alexander says his restaurant clients are "not lowering the standard of their ingredients, but perhaps looking for cheaper cuts in order to deliver that better price point." He points to David Lee, co-owner and executive chef of Nota Bene in Toronto, as an example. Chef Lee still offers tenderloins and ribsteaks, but he now includes a spice-dusted hanger steak at about half the price of the premium cuts. "I think it's my job as a chef to give a very different cut of meat to my customers at Nota Bene for between twenty to

twenty-five dollars," Chef Lee explains. Home cooks may not be able to match his professional results, but his advice to backyard cooks is simple: Buy high-quality meat, trim it well, then grill it to medium-rare over high heat. The only other key, according to butchers, is to slice the meat against the grain before serving, to maximize tenderness. Many of these cuts also absorb the flavours of rubs and marinades, and are complemented by post-grill garnishes such as chimichurri or salsa verde. For those willing to experiment, the reward is a succulent and flavourful meal - and a little bit more in the piggy bank. » Special to The Globe and Mail