Chef’s Log 10 October 2008
Jerk Pork Chops

This was, in its own way, a dinner to be proud of ... a new combination of dry Jamaican rub and Duroc pork, and a lovely new beer. Actually, it is of course the brewers who should be most proud, not me.

Once again, let’s start with the beer. This is what I wrote for Ratebeer about a new collaboration between De Proef and Allagash called Les Deux Brasseurs, or in English The Two Brewers.

Yes, this is another remarkable partnership between an American and a Belgian brewer. The appearance was just about perfect ... cloudy yellow orange amber with a huge firm head ... what I used to call lemon meringue pie beer when I first started reviewing. Absolutely striking appearance. Nose is funky, lemon citrus, orange, and more funk, but surprisingly pleasant if that is not an oxymoron. The taste again is funky, lemon sour, apple sour, and decidedly Brett, with a good American hop bite in the finish. With too much too old Brett a beer can be without sparkle, dead in the mouth; although the Brett in this will continue to age, at this time the palate on the beer is still lively. Nicely done, and nothing to complain about, and even a lot to like, but I can’t imagine drinking vast amounts of this!

The chop is striking as it is put on the grill, thick, heavily rubbed, and just starting to absorb the apple wood smoke.

The grill became explosively hot as the fat melted and started fat fires. The chop charred up nicely, the rub blackened, but I was still able to keep the pork chops medium rare. The days of cooking pork until it was hard, dry, and tasteless are long gone. It is, however, harder to find meat that has any taste to begin with; this is Duroc Pork, as in “Pork! The other red meat!” The flavor of the meat, the texture of the slightly under done preparation, and the fire of the charred rub interacted nicely.
It was also visually extremely pleasing. The chops did look even better after grilling, with a second dusting of jerk rub, and served with heirloom tomatoes, polenta, and a big glass of the *Les Deux Brasseurs* ale. The huge foamy head atop the cloudy orange beer and the glistening surfaces of the three very different tomatoes were especially inviting. Not surprisingly, the pork chops, tomatoes, and even the polenta all came from Derek’s Main Line Prime. The ale came from Matt’s Beer Yard in Wayne.

I’m finding that a double cut pork chop is just a bit more than I actually need for dinner. So, as before, I had photographic, photogenic rubble at the end of the meal.
We have an interesting virtual pet in the backyard, some sort of woodchuck or hedgehog. He does not seem to trust me very much. He happily grazes when I open the door, but quickly becomes alert and even more quickly flees.
I have simply not been able to convince him that we no longer grill wild rodents ... rats, hedgehogs, squirrels, woodchucks, and the like are not considered delicacies this far North. But I guess I can understand his concern ... the constant smell of grilling meat has to get on the nerves of a prey-species herbivore.