Jean is away doing healthful things with her friends. Off at Canyon Ranch. No doubt getting instruction in yoga and zen meditation, then getting a complete blood chemistry workup followed by age-adjusted, blood-chemistry-corrected, mood-calibrated dining advice for her optimal energy, professional drive, and libido. I’m provisioning as best I can for the long weekend without her.

As you can see, the provisioning was pretty goal-directed. I went to Main Line Prime for a grass-fed organic NY Strip Steak (about 1 pound), a two-bone veal chop (about 1 ¼ pounds), and a two-bone thick-cut Duroc pork chop (just under 1 ½ pounds). I got coleslaw and jalapeno pickles. I even got a thoroughly photogenic yellow cauliflower, which I will stick in the fridge until Jean gets home and figures out what to do with it.

But man does not live by food alone, nor does he need zen or yoga. Man needs drink to go with his food. I invited some MBA students and some Ph.D. students to help me work through some barbecue and some of my beer inventory, and I am chilling (1) Victory Braumeister Pils, Hop Wallop, and Baltic Thunder; (2) Dogfish Head Theobroma; (3) Ayinger Celebrator; (4) Allagash Hugh Malone and 2007 Interlude; and (4) Mikkeller Monk’s Brew. The table was as pretty as a picture.

I’ve noted before that I’m not exactly a health food kind of guy, and this has been confirmed pretty much by all of the photos I take, which show meat, more meat, beer, more beer, and occasionally something that was at one point capable of photosynthesis. Tonight’s dinner centered around a grass fed organic NY Strip Steak, heavily rubbed with a spicy Cajun blackening spice. My hope was the heat would provide flavor and hide any grease shortfall.
I think the shots pretty much explain what I did. I slammed the meat with hot spices. I smoked the steak over mesquite. I charred it.

And when one side was charred I turned it over and charred the other.
Jean’s out, so plating was pretty basic. A plate under the steak. Some coleslaw next to the steak. A great Danish Mikkeller copy of a Belgian Quad. Much happiness. The Financial Times amuses me at dinner now with stories of hedge funds going out for more capital, or the running total of financial sector losses ($1,000 billion and still counting), or the fact that Intel stunned the market by reporting losses across the board. Barbecue is not meant to have cloth placemats or fine linen napkins.
Could I finish this? Not with a large bottle of Mikkeller. Scraps remain.

Steak and a Cajun rub takes care of salt and grease groups, and a large bottle of Mikkeller Monk’s takes care of the alcohol group. But what about the rest of the food pyramid? After salt and grease come alcohol, sugar, and chocolate. Are we covered?
Indeed we are. Rooting about in the basement freezer I found chocolate and raspberry ruggulah of indeterminate age, which, after most of a large bottle of Mikkeller, seemed the perfect way to finish the last sips of beer.

Would Derek of Main Line Prime be pleased with this? Derek also owns a spectacular restaurant, named Derek’s, not far from here. No, he does not serve on old copies of the FT nor does he eschew napkins in favor of reusable paper towels. Would Jean be pleased? Well, no. Not with the rummaging in the freezer, not with any of it.

I am hoping that my grad students are pleased tomorrow with pulled pork, ribs, and beer. That covers salt, grease, and alcohol. And, of course, I’ll find some form of sugar and chocolate to cover the rest of the basic food groups.

ekc