It’s October, and it’s been more than four months since the last barbecue blog posting. Time to move on, even if Main Line Prime is gone. We found a new butcher in the Ardmore Farmers Market, Stoltzfus, who is able to provide great local lamb and pork. The weather is still nice for a little while longer, and I decided to plan a major barbecue. The story actually starts two days earlier, when I bought an entire pork loin and sliced the center into eight pork New York Strips, which I decided to call Beijing Strip Steaks. I gave them the usual massage with Cognac, then applied my favorite dry Jamaican Jerk rub, heavy on the Havaneros [their spelling, same incredible heat] from Kalyustan’s in New York. The next day I got eight racks of local lamb spare ribs from Stoltzfus, and dusted them with Cajun blackening spice. Both rubs are my own variants on Raichlen’s, and both have worked well for years. After 24 hours the lamb ribs were ready for the smoker. They get the traditional low and slow smoking, four hours at about 160 degrees over oak for deep smoky notes intense enough to fight their way through the Cajon spicing, and then another hour at 200 degrees to finish the cooking. They finish fall-apart tender, most of the fat melts off, and the surface is lightly crisped. This is probably my favorite way to prepare lamb now.

Next it’s time to stick the drinks in the beer fridge and to bring the pork to room temperature. The newly named Beijing Strips get grilled at a much higher temperature, of course, and briefly, so that they are medium well, just slightly pink, not too hard and dry. Without access to Duroc, my pork now lacks marbling, but the rub and the smoke continue to provide the necessary flavor.
I put out nibbles, in case the guests ever show up.
The table is set. The meats are ready. Nothing to do now but wait for the guests to arrive and think about pouring myself a Victory Wild Devil and cutting a piece of Shropshire.
We haven’t exactly been fasting in the months in which I have not blogged. I’ve learned to make lox. I’ve engaged in excessive explosions of baby back ribs. But until I found another local butcher I guess I wasn’t blogging. I’ll prepare a short post on catching up.

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