It was bitingly cold, and not exactly the best time of year to have a barbecue. By late afternoon the temperature had dropped into the teens, the wind chill was even lower of course, and the sun was setting. This was not exactly a perfect time to fire up the Bradley and smoke a side of salmon, or to fire up the Weber and char some jerked pork. Still, we had invited lots of friends, we had spent three days preparing the salmon and the pork, and nothing like a near death grilling experience was going to deter us.

The salmon endured the usual prep — four hours in Cognac, then two more days in rock salt and raw sugar.

Simultaneously, an entire pork loin from Stoltzfus, my pig man in the Ardmore Farmers’ Market, was enduring two days in dry jerk rub. We had the entire roast, bone-in, sliced into six thick chops. I then massaged them with a good seven-year-old Mexican tequila; admittedly this was starting to look like over-kill ... an entire side of salmon and an entire pork loin for what was expected to be only four people. And tequila? Good, seven-year-old tequila, sacrificed as part of a brining process? Well, yes. My photography coach, Michael Zorn, was coming to dinner with his wife, and only the best, and only the most photographically best, would do.

Of course, when we saw the volume of food ... the entire side of salmon, the entire pork loin, the cheeses ... we had enough sense to invite some more friends.
Since my photograph coach was coming I practiced new angles for smoke, fire, and meat.
Except, of course, my photography coach by then had called in a medical excuse … Michael’s wife was unable to travel. Another couple was delayed in Boston after a funeral. Leslie’s husband was at a partner’s meeting for his law firm.

So dinner was Leslie, my wife Jean, and myself. Jean prepared huge amounts of black Japanese rice, coleslaw for the jerk pork, sautéed spinach and garlic for the smoked salmon, and a chocolate cake. I chilled wine, champagne, and beer. And the three of us sat down for a dinner of excess. Leslie had never eaten pork before. Jean and I admitted that we had never previously served pork just after Shabbat prayers.

We will try again to coordinate with the Zorns. We will send them this blog to taunt them into trying again. And we will be eating jerk pork, smoked salmon, coleslaw, sautéed spinach, black rice, and chocolate cake for days to come.

You can obtain the preparation instructions for the salmon from the blog post of 28 November 2009. You can obtain the recipe for the jerk pork from the blog post of 8 November 2009.

ekc