

# DUTCH OVEN BASICS

## STORAGE:

- Store Clean;
- Stored Oiled (INSIDE & OUT);
- Store in Dry & Secure Spot (Rain will make it Rust).

## USE:

- Make Sure Clean BEFORE have to actually use it;
- Don't Forget Charcoal: Or hard wood coals in fire ready to go;
- Have the Proper Tools: Lid Tool, Shovel for Fire, Oven Mitts/Work Gloves, Tongs for Charcoal Briquettes, Stave if 2 Scouts needed to place/remove from fire, Gas Pliers great for draining or flipping Oven (to grab feet on bottom);
- Have Proper Cooking Utensils: Nothing plastic (will melt) – Metal Spatula & Cooking Spoon. Flat edge spatula works much better than rounded edge --- turn flat edge spatula upside down to use as scraper to scrape/stir along bottom of Dutch Oven to prevent food from burning to bottom of Oven;
- Wipe Oven Out With Paper Towels: Before using to insure clean and oil is not rancid --- re-oil as needed
- Do Not Drop or Thump Oven: Cast Iron is Brittle and can crack;
- Use Coals on Top & Bottom: To evenly cook food & prevent burning – see Charcoal Chart;
- Make Sure You Have Level Spot to Cook: More than one meal has spilled or boiled over because Dutch Oven not level or shifted as wood burned/broke down;
- Have Plan to Get Oven On & Off Fire: Buddy & Stave, if necessary – PRACTICE WITH BUDDY BEFORE OVEN HOT!!! Must lift/lower evenly together or Oven will slide toward lower end of stave!!!
- Have Plan for Lid: Clean surface (clean & dry stump or flat rock, not dirt) to place lid on when stirring, adding ingredients or serving;
- DO NOT STAND OVER OVEN WHEN REMOVING LID: Although timelessly hilarious to watch (traditional prank played on the new guys), it is dangerous to stand with any part of your body (especially your face) when you remove the lid from a hot Oven. Hot steam bursts out of the oven and super-heated oil deprived of oxygen bursts in to an impressive flame when lid is removed introducing oxygen;
- Consider Using Oven as Wok: Pre-heat, remove to level clean spot next/near to fire to fry meat, stir fry veggies, add ingredients, stir, check if crust is done, etc. Add Oven back to fire as necessary to keep hot enough. There is no need to stand over fire, getting burned & smoke in eyes to perform these tasks;
- Have Plan to Serve Meal: You can't put Hot Dutch Oven on top of Picnic Table – it will burn/brand it!!! Have a slab of sacrificial plank wood big enough for all feet of Oven to rest upon ... or use Cookie Sheet (be careful as Oven may slide off ... metal on metal can be slippery. Have Place to put Lid. Have Oven Mitt or Pliers to hold in place while scooping out food to serve. Have Metal Serving Utensil. Place Oven so people being served will not brush up against Oven and get burned. Warn people being served that Oven is Hot;
- Have a Plan to Keep Warm During Meal for Seconds: Few Coals on Lid, edge of fire, etc.,
- Scrape Out & Clean Right Away when Oven Empty: No reason to let it get cold and food to harden onto Oven Surfaces!

## CLEANING:

- Scrape Out THOROUGHLY & Place on Hot Fire & Let Bake (Works Like a Self-Cleaning Oven);
- Remove from Fire & Scrape out ashes – repeat as often as necessary (Caramelized sugars are worst);
- The better job you do of scraping, the fewer times you will have to rotate Oven on & off fire to clean;
- When Clean, let cool down to warm (not cold) and wipe out inside surfaces (don't forget inside of lid) with Vegetable Oil and Paper towels;
- Rotate through new paper towels, and re-oil, as necessary, till clean (Don't throw out dirty & oily paper towels ... when all done, use them (from dirtiest to cleanest) to wipe/oil outside of Oven;
- Store in Clean Dry Spot with Lid slightly ajar till Oven Cold (otherwise condensation/water can form and rust inside of oven).