



Less Is More

For nutritionist Ellie Krieger, eating less meat is a good idea, but summer cookouts can make that a challenge. She has a solution.

THE HEADY AROMA OF MEAT GRILLING over an open flame never fails to ignite my appetite. It's a built-in primal response, one that even my vegetarian friends admit to having. That intoxicating smell is the tease for the juicy, charred, succulent flavor payoff to come when it's time to dig in.

Trouble is, the kind and amount of meat we're used to tossing on the grill—fatty sausages, huge greasy burgers, and big marbled steaks—are, to be blunt, nutritional nightmares. They're loaded with bad-for-you fats that are strongly linked to heart disease and cancer, and those 12-ounce steaks are way too big for our own good. On the flip side, beef, pork, and lamb are packed with quality protein, key minerals like zinc and iron, as well as essential B vitamins. So what's a health-conscious carnivore to do? The answer is simple: Choose a lean cut of meat and eat less of it.

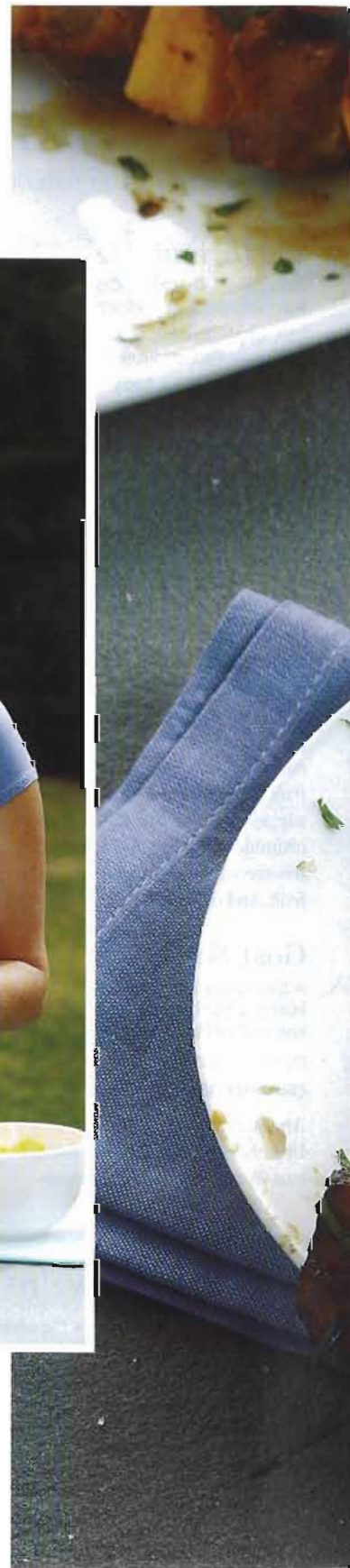
Go Lean In general, if it has the words "loin" or "round" in the name, the meat is lean. Beef sirloin, tenderloin, and bottom round are all lean grilling classics, as are tri-tip and flank steak. Pork tenderloin is nearly as lean as skinless chicken breast. And pork and lamb loin are good choices, too. Game steaks like venison are nearly fat-free and fantastic over an open flame. The key with all these cuts is to cook them to only medium doneness, because they'll dry out if overcooked.

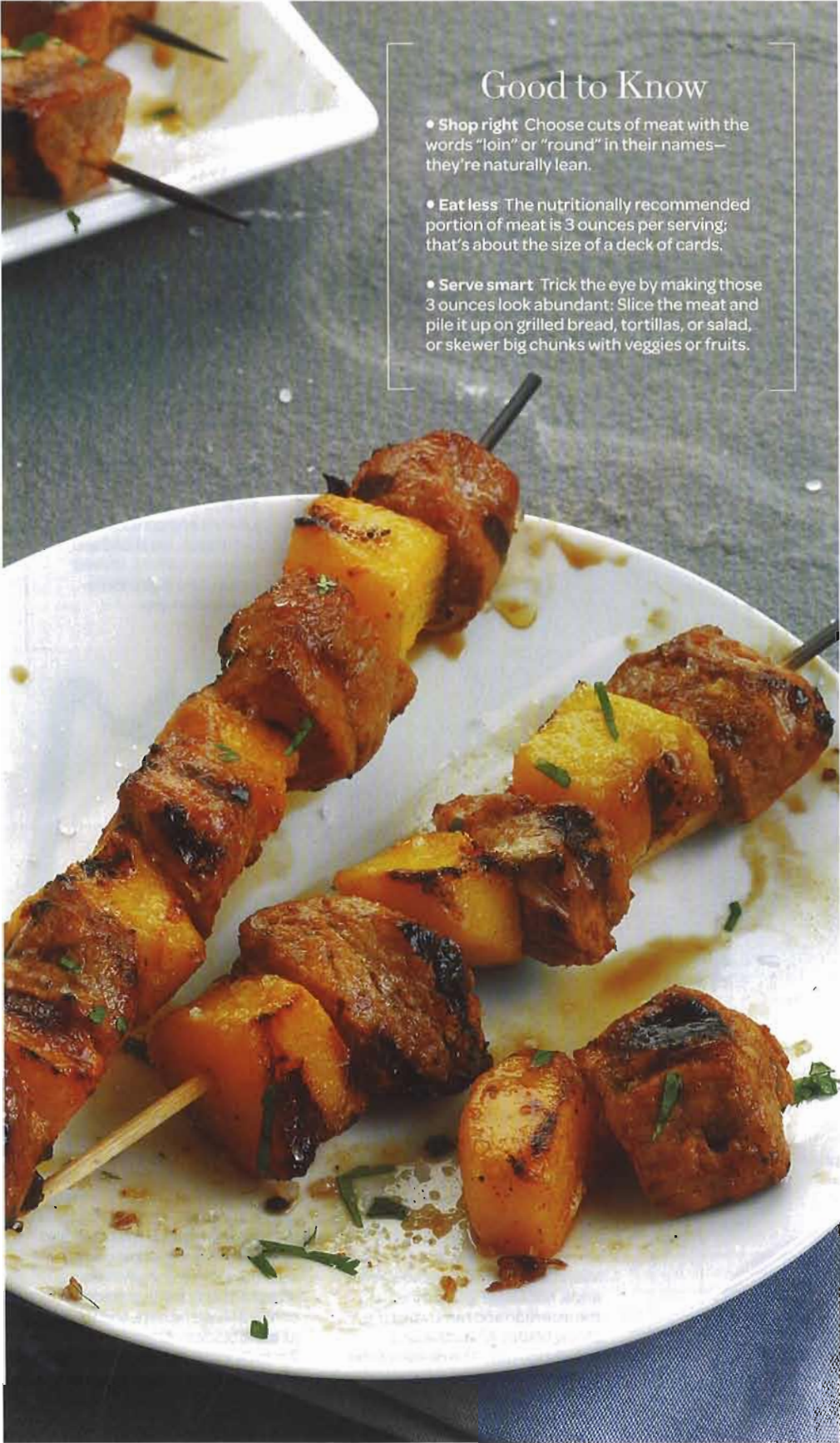
Portion Control Once you have the right cut, the next step to eating meat sensibly is to control your portions. The nutritionally recommended portion of meat is 3 ounces per serving. The problem is that if you see it on a plate, it's downright depressing—about the size of a deck of cards. My trick is to make it *look* abundant. We eat with our eyes, so rather than place a puny steak on a plate, where it's dwarfed by the side dishes, slice the meat thinly and pile it up on a piece of grilled garlic bread to sop up the juices. Or serve it mounded over whole-grain tortillas as part of a steak taco dinner. Skewering chunks of meat along with vegetables or fruit, as I do in the Ancho-Marinated Pork and Mango Skewers here, is another great way to grill your meat but not eat too much of it. You



Serve it smart. For Ellie, a great way to eat less meat is to skewer it.

get the perfect protein portion, but your plate is dominated by two big, bountiful, meaty skewers. It's all the primal satisfaction you want with none of the downsides.





Good to Know

- **Shop right** Choose cuts of meat with the words “loin” or “round” in their names—they’re naturally lean.
- **Eat less** The nutritionally recommended portion of meat is 3 ounces per serving; that’s about the size of a deck of cards.
- **Serve smart** Trick the eye by making those 3 ounces look abundant: Slice the meat and pile it up on grilled bread, tortillas, or salad, or skewer big chunks with veggies or fruits.

ancho-marinated pork and mango skewers

If you can’t find ripe mangos, substitute pineapple.

Serves 4 (2 skewers per person)

- ¼ cup fresh orange juice
- 2 Tbs. fresh lime juice
- 2 Tbs. canola oil; more for the grill
- 2 tsp. dark brown sugar
- 2 tsp. pure ancho chile powder
- 2 medium cloves garlic, minced
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt
- 1 lb. pork tenderloin, trimmed and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 medium ripe mangos, peeled, pitted, and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 8 skewers, 10 inches or longer, soaked in water for 30 minutes if wooden
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh cilantro

In a medium bowl, whisk the orange juice, lime juice, oil, sugar, ancho powder, garlic, pepper flakes, and ½ tsp. salt.

Add the pork, toss to coat, cover, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 4 hours.

Thread the pork and mango cubes onto the skewers, alternating them and beginning and ending with a piece of pork. Each skewer should have about 5 pieces of pork and 4 pieces of mango.

Prepare a medium gas or charcoal grill fire. Scrub the grill grate with a wire brush and then wipe clean with a paper towel dipped in oil. Cook the skewers, turning once, until the meat is browned on the outside but still slightly pink in the center, about 8 minutes. Serve garnished with the cilantro.

Registered dietitian Ellie Krieger is a Fine Cooking contributing editor.



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