

for three to four minutes. Rotate to two o'clock and continue to sear for three to four minutes, then *slide* the steak over to the cool side of the grill to cook for three to four minutes. Now flip the steak and repeat. The classic chef's method for testing doneness, says Pence, is to poke at the steak with your finger, then compare with the soft part of your hand between your thumb and forefinger. The steak's resistance should match that of the soft edge of your hand for rare, a quarter-inch back for medium-rare, another quarter-inch back for medium, and another quarter-inch for well-done. (Then you hit bone.) The steak will continue to cook for a while off the fire, so pull it when it's just shy of how you like it. Cover the steak and let it rest for ten minutes or so before serving. **M**

BEST SUMMER DRINK

The Gin Sling

It is still possible to find a decent gin and tonic from time to time — one that marries the herbaceous whisper of a good gin to the bright, quinine fizz of tonic freshly poured from a little glass bottle, all topped with an honest squeeze of lime. But even when made properly, the G&T is so quintessentially summery that it verges on cliché. As an alternative, try a gin sling, as reinvented by cocktail historian Dale DeGroff (kingcocktail.com). The term *sling*, which dates back to colonial times, simply refers to the combination of water, sugar, and liquor — a necessity then for dressing up spirits that were rougher and less consistent than today's. DeGroff's renewed sling



is everything that most G&Ts are not: ginnish, citrusy-tart, reviving, even as it noodles its way into your brain on a warm and lingering evening.

DO IT YOURSELF

DeGroff's recipe calls for 1 1/2 oz dry gin, 1 oz sweet vermouth, 3/4 oz fresh lemon juice, and 1 oz simple syrup (made by shaking a bottle full of equal parts cool water and superfine sugar). Shake all ingredients well with ice and strain into a rocks-filled Collins glass. Top with soda and garnish with a lemon twist. —J.H.

BEST NEW BACKYARD GEAR

Make Dinner With the Hottest Grill in Town



Barbeques Galore's *Prestige Toolset* (\$50) comes with a basting brush, tongs, a fork, a knife, and a four-in-one spatula/bottle opener/serrated knife/meat tenderizer. bbqgalore.com

Coleman's *Xtreme Wheeled Cooler* (\$50) boasts a large handle, oversize wheels for lugging it across the yard or beach, two-inch-thick insulation, and room to carry as many as 72 ice-cold cans plus ice. coleman.com



Because it's made of the material used in firefighters' jackets, the *BurnGuard Home* (\$25) cooking mitt withstands temperatures up to 625 degrees and blocks sizzling grease. burnguard.com



The Pitt's and Spitt's All-in-One Barbeque Pit Combo (\$2,550), more of a drum than a pit, comprises a smoker, a charcoal grill, and a gas grill for when you're too hungry to wait. pittsandspitts.com



Classic Shaker presents the *Glass Slipper* cocktail shaker (\$350), a handcrafted mixer available in five colors, in case the drinks you prefer are not. cocktailshaker.com

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Insert the *Maverick Redi-Chek Remote ET72* (\$60) probe into your steak and a remote sensor lets you check the temperature from anywhere within 100 feet. maverickhousewares.com

THE BEST NEW . . .

REFRESHER Microbrewers, whose very existence is a revolt against lawn-mower beers, are now making their own. Edison Light (edisonbeer.com) is in stores now, and Sam Adams Light is on the way. More will follow.

LITERARY SMUT Catherine Millet's *The Sexual Life of Catherine M.*, a controversial bestseller in Europe, makes *Penthouse Letters* look tame. But it's not porn; it's literature about sex. And that's your excuse.

OVER-THE-TOP BAR The Skin Pool Lounge (nongroup.com) at Vegas's Palms Casino features private cabanas, chaises set in multicolored pools, an elevated dance floor over the main pool, lights, and fog, and a general air of "aquatic voyeurism."