

# Tri-Tip



The meat is hard to find, but Costco always has it. It's called Tri-tip and because they have stores in California, they are familiar with it.

If you go to your local butcher, talk to them about tri tip. The manager usually knows what you're talking about. For clarification, see "What Is Tri Tip" at the bottom

The seasoning is called "Pappy's" and it can be purchased on the internet.

<http://www.salsasetc.com/catalog/d-728.html>

## Preparation: *By Tom Young*

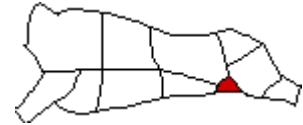
Pappy's is a dry seasoning, so the first thing you do is pour the Pappy's seasoning on a table or counter top. Be sure to lay down some foil or plastic before pouring the seasoning. It's a lot easier for clean up. Run the tri tip under water so the seasoning will be able to stick to the tri tip. Once you run it under water, put the tri tip in the seasoning and flip it on all sides to make sure the seasoning has covered the tri tip completely. Once completely covered you can put the tri tip in the refrigerator and let it marinate for an hour or so. You don't have to do this, but the meat is a little for tender if you let it marinate a while.

You should always cook tri tip on the grill. I've tried it in the oven and it doesn't taste the same. I put the grill on high and once it's good and hot, put the tri tip on. Depending on the thickness of the meat, you can grill anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes. Because it is a roast and is thinner on the ends than in the middle, the end pieces could be medium to well done, while the thick center could be medium rare to rare. You'll get a feel once you've made a couple. When I first started, I would slice it on the grill and cook each slice if it was too rare. I recommend you doing this until you get the hang of it.

## What Is Tri Tip?

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Tri-tip is a small roast cut from the bottom of the sirloin primal. There is only one tri-tip per side of beef, a total of two per animal.



Tri-tip also goes by the name "bottom sirloin butt" and "triangle roast", due to its triangular shape. In many parts of the country, your butcher will look at you funny if you ask for tri-tip...they have no idea what you're talking about. Try taking this document titled [Cuts From The Bottom Sirloin](#) to your butcher and asking them to order or cut a tri-tip for you.

Tri-tip is nicely marbled, tender, and one of the most flavorful cuts of beef you'll find. In its whole, untrimmed state, tri-tip may weigh about 5 pounds (Photo 1). After removing some of the fat and cutting a portion into culotte steaks, the roast you're likely to find at the supermarket will weigh 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 pounds and be 2-3" thick (Photo 2).



Photo 1. Whole, untrimmed tri-tip roast

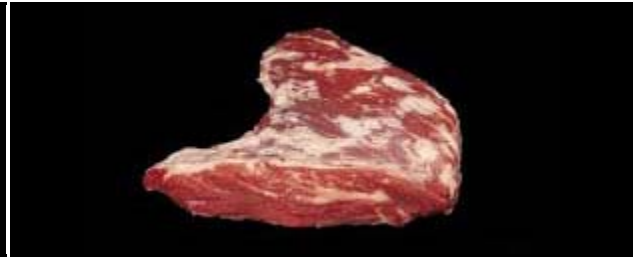


Photo 2. Tri-tip after fat and culotte steaks are removed

In [The Complete Meat Cookbook](#), authors Bruce Aidells and Denis Kelly write, "In the old days, when butchers cut their meat from the whole beef, they cut sirloins with the bone in, and the tri-tip portion, a triangular chunk of bottom sirloin, ended up as a nondescript part of sirloin steak. Nowadays the sirloin is boned out whole at the packing plant, and the two tri-tips are separated, boned, and sold to butchers whole, thereby creating a new and tender cut."

The Oregon Beef Council tells a slightly different story: "Tri-tip was seldom marketed when carcass beef or beef hind quarters were delivered to retail markets because there is only one per hind quarter. This meant that there was not enough for a case display, so the butcher would grind or cube it. Today, most stores receive boneless boxed beef. If you don't see tri-tip in the meat case, **ask for it**. Tri-tip roasts can be ordered separately if your butcher knows there is a demand."

Most tri-tip is shipped to the Western U.S. where it is very popular with consumers. Tri-tip is even included in many West Coast barbecue competitions as an optional category. It is often associated with California's central coast region and the Santa Maria Valley in particular, where "Santa Maria-style" tri-tip is the meat of choice. In a tradition going back to the days of Spanish rancheros, the meat is heavily seasoned with salt, pepper and garlic, cooked slowly over a red oak fire, then sliced across the grain and served with fresh salsa, cooked pinto beans, guacamole and warm tortillas.

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## Cuts From the Bottom Sirloin Beef Tri-Tip, Ball Tip and Flap

### **Beef Tri-Tip**

(IMPS/NAMP 185C)

The photo to the right outlines the beef Tri-Tip cut in white. It is a view from the Round end. Notice its triangular shape. The boneless Tri-Tip cut is separated from the ball tip and the flap through the natural seam.

### **Beef Ball Tip**

(IMPS/NAMP 185B)

From the same Round end view, the photo to the right outlines the beef ball tip in white. Notice its round ball shape. The boneless ball tip cut is separated from the Tri-Tip and the flap through the natural seam.

### **Beef Flap**

(IMPS/NAMP 185A)

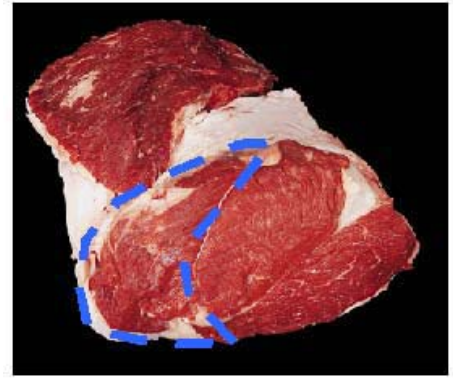
The flap meat cut is shown in white in the photo to the right. It is again from the same Round end view.

The boneless flap cut is separated from the Tri-Tip and the ball tip through the natural seam.

The heavy connective tissue and any cartilage from all three cuts shall be removed and discarded. The Tri-Tip can be defatted even more by trimming it practically free of fat.

\* If you are a meat cutter and still looking for additional information regarding the Tri-Tip cutting process, consult the Meat Buyers Guide available from the North American Meat Processors Association at [www.namp.com](http://www.namp.com).

Tri Tip



Ball Tip



Beef Flap

