

How To Make a Pan Sauce from Steak Drippings

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Your perfectly is waiting to be carved and you glance at the now-empty pan from cooking your steak. Luxe browned bits of steak drippings cling to the pan. Perhaps there's a little bit of butter and some fragrant herbs left in the pan, too. It seems like a true tragedy to waste any of the wonderful mess.

Fear not, because you can turn that pan of drippings into a tasty sauce for your steaks with a little broth or wine, a few aromatics, mustard, and a

pat of cold butter.

Pan sauces are designed to turn the browned bits in the bottom of a pan, lovingly known as *fond*, into a base for making sauce or gravy for the cooked meat. Building a pan sauce happens in four quick steps. It is best to have your ingredients ready before building the sauce.

Amping Up the Flavor of a Classic Pan Sauce

Once you've mastered this basic technique, feel free to play with the ingredients to make a myriad of other sauces. Use onions or garlic in place of the shallot here (or even capers, which pair exceedingly well with fish). Use fresh-squeezed juice, in whole or as part of the deglazing liquid, or substitute red wine for a more robust sauce. Use grainy or fiery mustards for the emulsifier. Finish the sauce with aged or cultured butter and a heavy sprinkling of chopped fresh herbs to suit the final dish.

Finish fast: Unlike gravy, pan sauces aren't designed to linger longingly on the table. Keep the sauce warm in the pan until the steaks are sliced and then serve with the sauce immediately.

Ingredients

Drippings from 1 to 2 pan-fried steaks

1 teaspoon

fresh thyme leaves

1

small shallot, minced

1/2 cup

dry white wine or broth

1 teaspoon

Dijon mustard

1 tablespoon

cold unsalted butter

Equipment

Cast iron skillet

[Whisk](#)

Measuring cup and measuring spoons

Instructions

Drain the fat, but don't clean the pan: While your steaks are resting, pour off the fat from cooking and any aromatics that were cooked with the steak, but do not wipe the pan clean.

Cook the shallot and thyme: Return the pan to medium heat and add the shallot and thyme and cook until fragrant and the shallot has softened.

Deglaze the pan: Add the wine or broth and scrape the browned bits off the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon or whisk. Cook until the liquid reduces slightly, about 1 minute.

Add the mustard and butter: Whisk in the mustard and remove the pan from the heat. Vigorously whisk in the cold butter until thickened.

Serve: Slice the steak and serve with the pan sauce.