

The "FixIt" Manual

GAS GRILL REPAIR & MAINTENANCE

By Romero Carl Hunter



WWW.CARLSGRILLTALK.COM

editing and website by: Jeanie Whitelaw
www.eyeonlife.net

Chapter 8 - Rock Grates and Flame Tamers (Heat Plates)

***"Ignorantia legis neminem excusat"* - Ignorance of the law excuses no one.**

Rock grates and flame tamers are hard to screw up. Sometimes, however, they go back in several ways when only one way is intended. They need only to sit in the grill, and can work OK even with small holes in them. You might want to use some garden gloves to protect your hands.

Gas grills usually have a plate or grate over the burners. The older grills used a rock grate with lava rock or a ceramic tile sitting on the burners. The purpose of this grate or plate is to diffuse the heat evenly over the cooking grids and hold the meat juices (which will smoke and provide some flavor to the cooked meat).

The original "lava" rock grates were meant to look like charcoal, as the first people to market the gas grills thought consumers might hesitate to buy them without a connection to the charcoal cooking they were use to. Certainly, the price of the early gas grills made them hard to sell compared to the charcoal grills of the time.

The grates and heat plates also provide some protection for the burners as the meat juices falling on the burners tend to increase the heat and combustion and increase the speed that the burners wear out. Ducane grills used burners with the gas ports on the top of the burner and the "lava-grates" they used kept the meat juices almost entirely on the grates and the ceramic tiles that sat on the "lava-grate" surface.

The grates and heat plates (sometimes called flame tamers) work effectively as long as they can sit without collapsing on the burners. They should be cleaned of rust and burnt meat juices, but they work just as well when they are rusted and burnt. They can even be patched for temporary use with heavy aluminum foil. The heat plate or rock grate needs only to sit over the burners to work. If you find a close fit, but not a duplicate replacement part, it will work just the same.

Some Charbroil and Thermos grills use a burner with a pointed top that is meant to serve as a heat plate as well. The addition of an extra heat plate over these burners would spread the heat more evenly. You can also use a rock grate, ceramic plates or tiles instead of heat plates which might save some money. To do that, you have to see if the grill has some brackets or ledges on the front and back that might support the grate. Then try to find a grate on one of the "aftermarket" grill parts websites, such as www.clagrills.com to find a possible fit.

Rock Grates and Flame Tamers (Heat Plates) Images



Great Outdoors 1000 Rock Grate with Rock (ceramic), while used, is still in "usable" condition.



New Ducane Lav-a-Grate



Great Outdoors DG450 -This is used, but still has plenty of use left



Members Mark Y0101XC Stainless Steel (400 grade) half brushed - good condition.



My old, caved in, Falcon rock grate. Note where it has caved in. It needs replacement.