

Christmas Dinner

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Recipes courtesy of Chef J Whiting

Stuffed Pork Tenderloin

- 1 pork tenderloin

Spice Rub:

- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp dried sage
- 1 tsp chopped, fresh rosemary
- ½ tsp allspice

Combine all ingredients and set aside.

Filling:

- 1/3 cup Feta cheese
- ½ a sweet apple, chopped
- 1/3 cup toasted, chopped pecans
- ¼ cup chopped shallot
- 1 TBS balsamic vinegar
- 2 tsp spice rub

Combine all ingredients and set aside.

You can usually find pork tenderloins packed in brine at your standard supermarket. If you have a nice butcher shop close by you will be treated to a much better product, but you will want to soak the tenderloin in brine overnight, or at least for a few hours, to help it retain moisture. Remove the silver skin by carefully cutting under the thickest part of that connective tissue with a thin sharp knife, such as a filet knife. Hold that end with a paper towel to get a firm grip, gently cut along the length of the silver skin with your knife angled up so that you remove it while leaving as much of the meat as possible. When that is all cleaned up it's time to butterfly. Simply cut through the tenderloin lengthwise until you can fold it open, leaving a solid, flat piece of pork. Very gently pound it with a meat mallet or empty wine bottle to flatten and thin it out. Again, a real butcher shop is your best bet- they will do all of this for you!

Heat your oven to 350.

Pile the filling into the center of the pork tenderloin.

Carefully roll the tenderloin up around the filling.

Tie the Pork up with butcher's twine so that the filling cannot spill out.

Season the outside of the tenderloin with the remaining spice rub.

Heat an oven safe pan to medium.

Sear the tenderloin on three sides until just golden brown, when you get to the fourth side throw the pan in the oven and let it go for about 25 minutes.

When the center of the roast reaches 160 remove it from the pan and set it aside. Let the roast rest for at least 5 minutes before removing the string and slicing.

There will be some tasty dripping left in the pan that can easily be turned into a sauce by whisking together a bit more herbs, a dollop of grain mustard or a sprinkle of flour, and a half a glass of cider, beer, or wine. Simmer to reduce. Season to taste.

Roasted Brussels Sprouts

- 1 lb. fresh or frozen Brussels sprouts
- 4 strips bacon, chopped
- 2 TBS finely chopped shallot
- 2 tsp chopped fresh rosemary
- 2 tsp orange zest
- Salt & pepper

Heat your oven to 350.

Slowly cook the bacon over medium heat to render out the fat in a small frying pan. Save 1 tablespoon of the fat for the mac and cheese you'll be making.

In a roasting pan, toss the bacon with the remaining ingredients and mix up to make sure the sprouts are nicely coated.

Roast for about 20 minutes, stirring 2 or 3 times. The cooking time will depend on how done you like your sprouts; you can let them go for about 15 minutes for a crunchier, fresher Brussels sprout or cook the heck out of them for about 25 minutes, letting them soak up all of that great bacon fat.

Mac & Cheese

- 1 lb. macaroni, cooked
- 1 TBS fat (bacon is best!)
- 1 TBS flour
- 1 cup milk
- ½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 cup of your favorite cheese, shredded
- Salt & pepper

Mix the fat and flour together in a large pot over medium heat and cook for 3-4 minutes, whisking continually until it starts to bubble up and take on a golden color.

Slowly whisk in the milk.

Add the nutmeg and bring to a simmer.

Slowly mix in the cheese and stir until melted.

Add the cooked macaroni and stir to coat. Season to taste.