

Fall... for many it involves changing of clothing choices, for some it is about Halloween and Thanksgiving, but for many Minnesotans, it also means, hunting season!

This week, we will feature some new ideas for venison, duck and pheasant.

Good Luck to all the hunters out there - and be safe!

Bacon-Wrapped Venison Tenderloin with Garlic Cream Sauce

*Prep Time: 15 min.
Cook Time: 1 hr. 10 min.
Total Time: 1 hr. 25 min.
Servings: 6*

6 thick slices bacon
2 (3/4 lb.) venison tenderloin roasts
2 tsp. olive oil, divided
1/4 tsp. onion powder, divided
salt and black pepper to taste
2 T. butter
1 (8 oz.) package sliced cremini mushrooms
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 T. chopped green onion, or more to taste
1/2 C. heavy whipping cream, or more to taste

Gather the ingredients. Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Arrange bacon slices on a slotted baking pan. Bake bacon in the preheated oven until partially cooked but still flexible, 6 to 8 min.

Brush venison tenderloins with olive oil and season with onion powder, salt, and black pepper. Place tenderloin roasts side by side and wrap them together in strips of partially cooked bacon. Place into a roasting pan.

Roast in the preheated oven until bacon is browned and an instant-read meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of a tenderloin reads at least 145°F, about 1 hour.

Heat butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add mushrooms and garlic; cook and stir until mushrooms are soft, 8 to 10 min. Stir in green onion. Stir in cream and cook, stirring often, until heated through. Serve sauce with tenderloins.

Garlic Roasted Duck Breast

*Prep Time: 10 min.
Cook Time: 13 min.
Additional Time: 5 min.
Total Time: 28 min.
Servings: 1*

1 (6 oz.) skin-on duck breast
2 cloves garlic, cut into 1/8-inch strips
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. ground black pepper
1 sprig fresh rosemary

Place duck breast skin side-down on a cutting board. Cut a small slit from top to bottom, 2/3 of the way through the duck breast. Season with salt and pepper. Preheat oven to 400°F.

Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Place duck breast skin side-down in the hot skillet; cook until browned, about 30 seconds. Flip and repeat on the other side.

Transfer duck breast to a clean work surface, skin-side down. Place 3 or 4 garlic strips inside the slit. Place rosemary sprig over garlic; top with remaining garlic strips. Place skin side-up in a baking pan.

Bake in the preheated oven until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the center reads 120°F, about 10 min. Cover with aluminum foil. Let rest for 5 min. before slicing.

Pheasant Nuggets

*Prep Time: 20 min.
Cook Time: 15 min.
Total Time: 35 min.
Servings: 5*

2 lbs. pheasant breast, cut into strips
1 tsp. meat tenderizer
1 C. all-purpose flour
salt and pepper to taste
1/2 C. dry potato flakes
1/2 (16 oz.) package buttery round crackers, crushed
1 egg
1/2 C. milk

Preheat a deep fryer for 375 to 400°F.

Sprinkle the pheasant meat with meat tenderizer and pound lightly with a mallet to make all the pieces uniform and the same thickness. Using a medium bowl, combine the flour, seasoned salt, pepper, potato flakes and crushed cracker crumbs. Mix well and set aside.

In a separate medium bowl, combine the egg and the milk and whisk until smooth. Dip the pheasant meat strips into the egg mixture then dredge each strip into the flour mixture. Coat well and thoroughly and lay out on a plate so the strips can be easily transferred to the deep fryer.

Place the strips in a deep fryer set at 375 to 400°F until golden brown.

Note: You can also pan fry these in a skillet over medium high to high heat with 1 C. oil for pan frying, but you may need to flip them if they are not submerged in oil.

Pheasant Pesto Pasta

*Prep Time: 15 min.
Cook Time: 1 hr.
Additional Time: 15 min.
Total Time: 1 hr. 30 min.
Servings: 2*

4 skinless pheasant breast halves
3/4 C. white wine
8 oz. dry fettuccine pasta
1 T. olive oil
1/2 onion, chopped
8 mushrooms, sliced
1 C. chopped fresh spinach leaves
1/2 C. white wine
1/4 C. heavy cream
1/4 C. pesto sauce
2 T. grated Parmesan cheese, or to taste

Preheat an oven to 350° F.

Place the pheasant breasts into a baking dish, and pour in 3/4 C. white wine. Bake in the preheated oven until the pheasant is no longer pink in the center, about 45 min. An instant-read thermometer inserted near the bone should read 165°F. Remove from the oven and allow to cool. Once cool, remove the meat from the bones, and cut into bite sized pieces.

Fill a large pot with lightly salted water and bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Once the water is boiling, stir in the fettuccini, and return to a boil. Cook the pasta uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the pasta has cooked through, but is still firm to the bite, about 8 min. Drain well in a colander set in the sink.

Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Cook and stir the onion until it has softened and turned translucent, about 5 min. Add the mushrooms, spinach, and pheasant pieces. Cook until the mushrooms have softened, then pour in 1/2 C. of white wine, cover, and cook 5 min. Stir in the cream and pesto, and remove from the heat. Place the fettuccini in a serving bowl, pour the pheasant sauce over top, and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese to serve.

Sous Vide Duck Breast

*Prep Time: 10 min.
Cook Time: 1 hr. 10 min.
Additional Time: 1 hr. 5 min.
Total Time: 2 hrs. 25 min.
Servings: 2*

2 (8 oz.) boneless duck breast halves, skin on
salt and black pepper to taste
2 tsp. fresh thyme leaves
1 tsp. vegetable oil

Cut several very shallow crosswise slashes across the skin of each duck breast about 1/2 inch apart. (The cuts should only barely cut into the skin and fat; don't cut into the meat.) Season skin sides with salt, then generously season meat sides with salt, pepper, and thyme. Place into a heavy-duty resealable plastic bag, squeeze out all the air, and seal. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

Fill a large Dutch oven about 2/3 full with water and place over medium heat; heat to 135°F. Attach a candy thermometer to the side of the Dutch oven in order to monitor and maintain the water temperature. Place a silicone hot pad into the bottom of the pot to keep the plastic bag from contacting the bottom of the pan.

Place the sealed plastic bag into the Dutch oven. Cook, moving the bag around occasionally and adjusting the heat as necessary to maintain the temperature at 135°F, for 1 hour.

Remove duck breasts from the plastic bag and pat dry. Generously season skin sides with salt.

Heat oil in a skillet over high heat. Place duck breasts, skin-side down, in the hot skillet until fat renders and skin is golden brown, 5 min. Turn breasts over and cook until lightly browned and meat still pink in the center, 1 min. Let rest for 2 min. before slicing.

Venison Cream Cheese Stuffed Crescent Rolls

*Prep Time: 20 min.
Cook Time: 15 min.
Total Time: 35 min.
Servings: 8*

1 lb. ground venison
8 oz cream cheese plain, softened at room temperature
1/2 bunch green onions chopped
1/2 red onion chopped
1-2 jalapenos diced
2 pkg. crescent rolls
1/4 tsp. chili powder
1/4 tsp. onion powder
1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper more if you like spicy
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare two medium baking sheets with parchment paper and spray with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside.

Season venison with chili powder, onion powder and cayenne pepper. Cook in medium skillet over medium high heat until cooked through.

Drain any grease if needed.

Transfer cooked venison to a large bowl with softened cream cheese and add chopped green onion, red onion, yellow onion, jalapeno and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Using a spoon, stir well until ingredients are evenly distributed and cream cheese is mixed in.

Take crescent rolls out of packaging and lay each one flat on your baking sheets. Spoon about 1/3 C. of filling onto each roll, until all 8 are filled evenly.

Fold each corner of the roll to the center and press down so it is securely closed. It is okay if there is some visible filling between corners.

Place baking sheets in the oven for 8-12 min. (or per package instructions) and remove from oven when the crescent rolls are golden brown.

Serve hot. Serve alongside roasted vegetables, cauliflower mashed potatoes and/or a side salad.

Store any leftovers in airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Microwave to reheat.

Venison Fajitas

Prep Time: 30 min.

Cook Time: 15 min.

Total Time: 45 min.

Servings: 6

2 tsp. seasoned salt

1/4 tsp. garlic salt

1/2 tsp. black pepper

1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper

1 tsp. dried oregano

1-1/2 lbs. venison, cut into 2 inch strips

4 T. vegetable oil

1 med. red bell pepper, cut into 2 inch strips

1 med. yellow bell pepper, cut into 2 inch strips

1 med. onion, cut into 1/2-inch wedges

12 fajita size flour tortillas, warmed

Combine seasoned salt, garlic salt, black pepper, cayenne pepper, and oregano to make the fajita seasoning. Sprinkle two tsp. of the seasoning over the sliced venison. Mix well, cover, and refrigerate for 30 min.

Heat 2 T. of oil in a heavy frying pan. Cook bell peppers and onion until starting to soften, then remove. Pour in remaining oil, then cook venison until browned. Return pepper mixture to the pan, season with remaining fajita seasoning, and reheat. Served with the warmed tortillas.

Quote of the Week:

“A smile is the light in your window that tells others that there is a caring, sharing person inside.”

~ Denis Waitley