
Venison Wellington “For The Welly!”

Ingredients

1 Decent sized “hunk of deer back strap” (Can be replaced with Beef, Elk, etc.. but Tenderloin for those)

2 ½ Cups of Mushrooms (Not canned!)

2 Sprigs of Thyme

5-8 Slices of Prosciutto

1 Roll of Puffed Pastry

2 Tbsp of Hot English Mustard

1 Egg yolk

3 Tbsp of Searing Oil

Method

This recipe is a great flex on any guest who brags about their home cooking skills, or one who isn't completely sold on the beauty of wild game. I've made it for family dinners, celebrations, and just supper on a Thursday night.

Step one is the most important step in the whole game, mess this up and it will wreck your dish. Mince your mushrooms, almost to a puree, then spread thin in a non-stick pan and toast out all the moisture. You're going to be shocked at how much water is in a mushroom, make sure they're dried out. Not fried, just dried. Once complete pick a sprig of Thyme and add the leaves to the mushroom. Throw that in a bowl and toss it in the fridge to chill.

Step two is to get that sear on your back strap. Heat your searing oil in a cast iron, or any pan that can withstand high temps. Salt & Pepper your back strap and then brown on all sides. This is the last time you're going to get to add flavour to that meat before it gets wrapped up so let's get it right!

Once you've browned the meat feel free to make a nice sauce in that pan (see our Elk Diane recipe for some tips there) but I'm not a gravy on Wellington guy so I'm done with that now.

Before the meat cools brush your hot mustard all over the back-strap. Put it on a plate, and toss that in the fridge to cool as well. As the meat cools, it will adopt some of that delicious mustard flavour.

At this point I usually go have a glass of wine or whatever and wait. Give that meat time to cool, and the mushrooms too. Once they're adequately chilled it's time for the hard part. Now if you've ever gotten a Christmas present from me, you'd know I can't wrap worth a cr*p! That's what makes this difficult for me. For step 3 we're going to lay plastic film (seran wrap) on a cutting board and layer our prosciutto on top of the plastic cling wrap. Then spread your mushroom mixture all over the prosciutto. Once you're convinced you've got it set up it's now time to lay your perfectly browned back strap onto the mushrooms. Using the plastic wrap we now roll up the meat in a nice little package with the mushrooms casing the back strap, and the prosciutto holding it all together.

Stick that in the fridge, or freezer, and let it set up. You want to be able to easily remove the plastic wrap without it all falling apart.

Time for a second glass of wine!

Some folks like to put more plastic wrap out for the last part... I just throw some flour on the board and roll out my pastry. Once your meat packa.... Once your back-strap setup has cooled place it on the pastry and roll it up nicely. Use the egg yolk to pinch the seams, then vent the top with a few delicate slices. Brush egg yolk all over your newly cased wellington and salt generously.

Bake it off at 375 degrees until a lovely golden brown, do a quick temp check on the doneness of the meat (I pull it at 120) then rest it on your counter for 5 or so minutes to let the juices re-absorb.

Slice in generous hunks. Don't be stingy, this is your moment and if you cut this in half inch pieces you aren't going to keep that beautiful crust/mushroom mixture intact on the meat.

Serve with anything.... Seriously. Nothing else on that plate is going to matter anyways. So, have at 'er.

I've been in love with this recipe for ages, I hope it brings you and your family as much ooo's and aaahhh's as it did mine. SJ