



Pork Loin stuffed with Spinach and Gorgonzola

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In keeping with my summer theme of getting the heat out of the kitchen, I am always looking for food to throw on the grill. This roast pork takes a little prep work, but is quite tasty and makes a great presentation for your guests.

When cooking pork loin, or most any roast, I like to tie them up with cooking twine. You can find this in most kitchen stores, or simply ask the butcher at your favorite market to pull a few feet from their roll. Cooking twine is 100% cotton, made for food contact, and holds up to the heat.

To make the opening for the stuffing, I used a knife sharpening steel. These work great, but any metal or other dowel with a rounded or pointed end that is approximately 1/4" in diameter should do. Just make sure you wash thoroughly before and after use to prevent food contamination.

Finally, I use disposable pastry bags to push the stuffing into the meat. You'll find these at the local craft stores that carry baking supplies, at kitchen stores, or on the web from a number of sources. Don't use your regular pastry bags – you'll never get the smell out. And if you don't have one, simply use a heavy plastic freezer bag and clip off one corner.

This is another recipe where you're going to get your hands in the food, so scrub up and enjoy.

Pork Loin with Spinach and Gorgonzola

- 1 lb. Pork loin
- 4 oz. fresh spinach (you can substitute frozen)
- 2 oz. chopped Kalamata olives
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed in a garlic press
- 2 oz. Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled
- Salt
- Fresh ground pepper
- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary (1 1/2 tsp dry)
- 1 tbsp fresh sage (1 tsp dry)
- Extra virgin olive oil

Wash spinach thoroughly, drain, and pat dry to remove moisture. Chop the spinach into fine pieces. In a bowl, combine the spinach, olives, garlic, Gorgonzola and 1 tbsp olive oil. Mix thoroughly. Add salt and pepper to taste. Set aside.

Wash the pork loin and pat dry. Insert the sharpening steel or dowel into the center of one end, carefully pushing through the middle of the loin and out the other end. Using your fingers to open up the cavity, being careful not to tear a hole in the outside of the pork loin.

Spoon the mixture into a pastry bag and cut back the tip so that the opening is approximately ½” round. Insert the open end as far as possible into one end of the cavity and begin to squeeze the mixture into the pork loin. Stop, remove the bag, and use the steel, dowel, or your fingers to push the mixture into the cavity. Repeat this process from both ends, using all of the mixture.

Tie off the ends of the pork loin tightly with cooking twine, then tie a length of twine around the meat every two inches or so. The twine should be tight and pull into the flesh slightly, but should not constrict the loin and allow for expansion when cooking.

Coat the outside of the pork loin with olive oil. Mix the rosemary and sage together and cover the top. Season with salt and pepper.

Cook on a grill over medium heat, using the indirect method. The pork should not be directly over the heat source. You can either turn off one section of your burner, or if you are using charcoal, move the coals to one side of the grill. Close the cover. (If you don't have a cover, use a disposable aluminum pan that is about the size of your grill)

Cooking times vary with grills, so to be safe, test with a thermometer in the middle. It should read 170 degrees when finished. My pork loin required about 50 minutes. Remove from the heat and let it rest for 15 minutes before carving. Be sure to remove the twine and cut into medallions approximately 1” thick for serving.

I like to whip up a 50/50 blend of sweet potatoes and new potatoes with a little butter, placed a small mound on the plate, and lay the medallions on the potatoes. Top it off with a tall sprig of fresh rosemary and you have a tasty and impressive display for your guests.

Bon Appetit!