

How to roast a

If there really is a life of Riley, it probably involves roasting. Of all cooking techniques, this has to be one of the easiest because you do almost none of the work. Sautéing something means you have to stand there flipping and stirring. With boiling, you have to keep an eye on the pot. Even grilling requires ongoing attention. But roasting? You season a chicken or large cut of meat, put it on a rack over a pan, slide it into a hot oven, and leave it alone. You spend more interactive energy waiting in line at a fast-food drive-through.

Given all of the other great cooking ideas and procedures you've learned in our ongoing Cooking Class 2000 series, we thought this would be a good month to let you kick back and allow physics and hardware to take over. Oh, and one other thing: Roasting brings out flavors and turns a humble cut of meat into something spectacular.

How does roasting do its user-friendly thing? It simply follows basic science: As intense dry heat penetrates the chicken or meat inside the oven, the juices bubble to the surface. The liquid evaporates, leaving proteins and sugars that caramelize the meat to create the characteristic roasted color, aroma, and flavor.

A few words of advice: Roasting generally requires tender cuts, which are usually higher in fat. We've used beef tenderloin, pork loin, leg of lamb, and whole chicken—all moderately lean. There are arguably leaner cuts of beef and pork, but they require moist cooking (such as braising or stewing) to make them tender.

As you might imagine, on account of all the work it's been doing while you're going about your business, a chicken or roast needs a brief rest when it comes out of the oven before you step back in for the glory of the carving. Here again, your roast is doing the work for you. While the meat is kicking back on the counter, its internal temperature continues to rise. This finishes the cooking process while allowing the juices to settle and redistribute. That means they'll stay in the meat rather than escape to your cutting board. Unfortunately, you have to make a slight effort here. After you've taken the meat or chicken from

the oven and put it on a plate, you can deglaze the pan, which involves pouring liquid such as wine, broth, or water into the roasting pan and scraping up all the browned bits in the bottom. In a few moments, everything dissolves and mingles, and you have a savory broth that can be served as is or used as the base for a gravy or sauce.

A cooking technique like roasting may seem counterintuitive to our modern attachment to instant gratification, but consider this: A chicken or roast can be seasoned hours or even a day before cooking. By late afternoon, just put it in the oven and go for a walk. You'll come home to a big olfactory rush; the only drawback is that you'll barely be able to wait to sit down at the table.

Or you can make a big roast on Sunday and eat like royalty all week. That leftover roast beef, lamb, pork, or chicken in the refrigerator almost makes itself into sandwiches, main-dish salads, pastas, and quick soups. Again, the work is done for you. Where's the downside? Forget that—where's the carving knife?

Full Credit

You'll learn to make these five recipes in this installment of Cooking Class 2000.

Asian Roasted Chicken	Mediterranean Roasted Leg of Lamb With Red Wine Sauce
Honey-Cumin Roasted Pork With Caramelized Onions	Pepper-Crusted Beef Tenderloin With Horseradish Sauce
Sunday Roasted Chicken With Giblet Gravy	

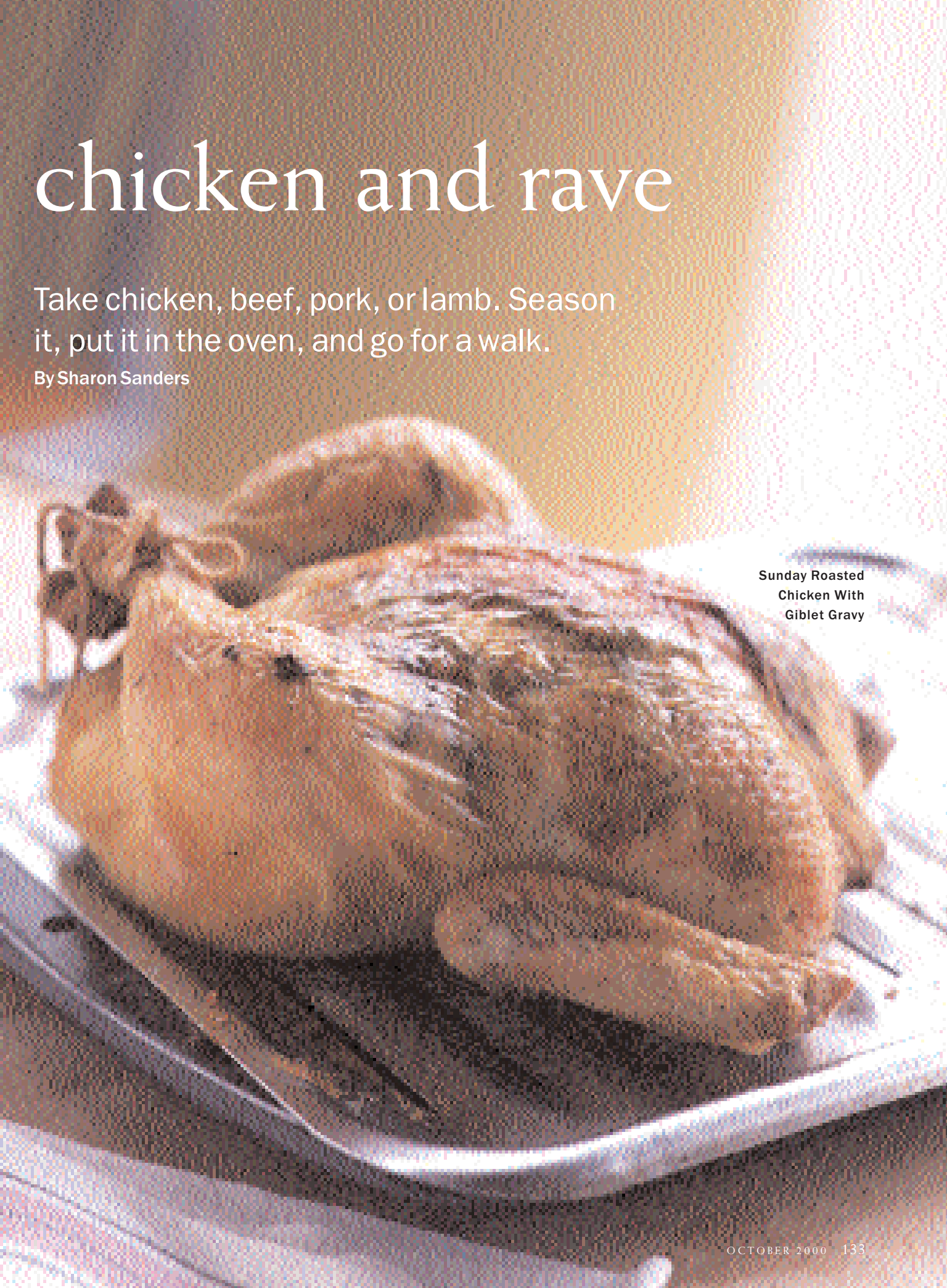
Techniques You'll Learn

- Seasoning and tying a roast
- Deglazing a roasting pan

chicken and rave

Take chicken, beef, pork, or lamb. Season it, put it in the oven, and go for a walk.

By Sharon Sanders

A whole roasted chicken is the central focus of the image. It is cooked to a golden-brown color and is resting on a metal roasting rack. The chicken is positioned diagonally across the frame. The background is a warm, textured surface, possibly a wall or a backdrop, in shades of orange and yellow. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the chicken's skin.

Sunday Roasted
Chicken With
Giblet Gravy

Sunday Roasted Chicken With Giblet Gravy

To save time, we made the broth for the gravy by simmering canned chicken broth with vegetables and the giblets and the neck. Make this while the chicken roasts.

tips

To make stock for soups and sauces, place the bones and discarded skin from a roasted chicken in a Dutch oven. Cover with water, and simmer for 1 to 3 hours. Strain before using.

- 1 (6-pound) roasting chicken
 - 2 (16-ounce) cans fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth, divided
 - 1 carrot, cut into 2-inch pieces
 - 1 celery stalk, cut into 2-inch pieces
 - 1 onion, quartered
 - 2 large garlic cloves, unpeeled and halved
 - 2 bay leaves
 - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
 - 1 tablespoon dried thyme
 - 1 tablespoon dried rubbed sage
 - ¼ cup all-purpose flour
 - ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1.** Remove the giblets and neck from chicken, discarding the liver. Cut off the wing tips, and combine with giblets, neck, 3 cups broth, carrot, celery, onion, garlic, and bay leaves in a saucepan. Bring to a boil; partially cover, reduce heat, and simmer for 45 minutes. Strain broth mixture through a sieve into a bowl, reserving broth and giblets. Mince giblets; set aside. Discard the remaining solids.
 - 2.** Preheat oven to 375°.
 - 3.** Rinse chicken with cold water; pat dry. Trim excess fat. Starting at the neck cavity, loosen skin from breast and drumsticks by inserting fingers, gently pushing be-

tween skin and meat. Combine salt, thyme, and sage in a small bowl. Rub thyme mixture under loosened skin and over breast and drumsticks. Gently press skin to secure. Tie legs with string.

4. Place chicken, breast side up, on the rack of a broiler pan or roasting pan. Insert a meat thermometer into meaty part of thigh, making sure not to touch bone. Bake at 375° for 1 hour and 30 minutes or until the thermometer registers 180° and juices run clear. Cover chicken loosely with foil, and let stand 10 minutes for chicken to reabsorb juices. Discard skin. Remove rack from pan. Add ½ cup broth to drippings in pan (you'll have about ¾ cup drippings), scraping pan to loosen browned bits. Pour drippings into a zip-top plastic bag. Snip off a corner of bag; drain liquid into saucepan, stopping before fat layer reaches opening. Discard fat.

5. Add the reserved giblet mixture to the broth mixture in saucepan.

6. Combine remaining ½ cup broth and flour in a bowl. Add flour mixture to saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and cook 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Stir in reserved giblets and pepper. Serve with chicken. Yield: 10 servings (serving size: 3 ounces chicken and ¼ cup gravy).

CALORIES 202 (32% from fat); FAT 7.1g (sat 2g, mono 2.4g, poly 1.6g); PROTEIN 28.8g; CARB 3.5g; FIBER 0.2g; CHOL 115mg; IRON 2.6mg; SODIUM 469mg; CALC 26mg

Equipment for Roasting

You need only a few essentials for roasting: an oven; a heavy, shallow roasting pan; and a thermometer to determine doneness. Here's how to make those essentials work optimally in the process.

Oven

Position the rack in the center—usually the second level from the bottom—so hot air can evenly surround the roast.

Pan

Most roasting pans are at least 13 x 9 inches or larger. In addition, you need a slightly raised rack that elevates the meat above the pan. This prevents the meat from cooking in its drippings and allows adequate circulation. Some pans come with racks; others are sold separately. Ideally, the pan should extend 2 or 3 inches beyond the edges of the roast. If the pan is too large, meat juices will evaporate too quickly, and the drippings may burn instead of caramelizing. You don't necessarily have to invest in

an expensive pan; your oven's broiler pan can work just as well.

Thermometer

Three types can be used. A standard meat thermometer (1) is inserted into the thickest part of the roast prior to cooking. It stays in the oven during the process. These are inexpensive and, for the most part, accurate.

An instant-read thermometer (2) is inserted into the roast, read, then taken out. It does not stay in the oven.

Advantage: It's more accurate than a basic meat thermometer. Disadvantage: You have to check the temperature early and more frequently. If you wait too long in the cooking time, there is a possibility of overcooking your roast.

Our preference: an instant-read that sits outside the oven, connected directly to the roast inside with a wire containing a stainless-steel sensor (3). It lets you keep track of the temperature without



your having to open the oven. You set the end temperature for the food (180° for roast chicken, for example), and the thermometer continually monitors the heat. When the roast reaches the temperature you've selected, an alarm sounds. Cost: \$30 to \$35; available through Williams-Sonoma (800-541-2233 or www.williams-sonoma.com); or Chef's (800-338-3232 or www.chefscatalog.com).

We suggest

a cutting board with a built-in moat designed to catch juices. If you don't have this kind of board, you can improvise one by placing a heavy wooden cutting board in a baking sheet with sides or in a jelly-roll pan.

Pepper-Crusted Beef Tenderloin With Horseradish Sauce ►

- 1 (4-pound) beef tenderloin
- 1½ teaspoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons dry breadcrumbs
- 3 tablespoons minced fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1½ teaspoons coarsely ground black pepper
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- Cooking spray
- 1 cup fat-free sour cream
- 2 tablespoons prepared horseradish
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
- ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ teaspoon hot pepper sauce

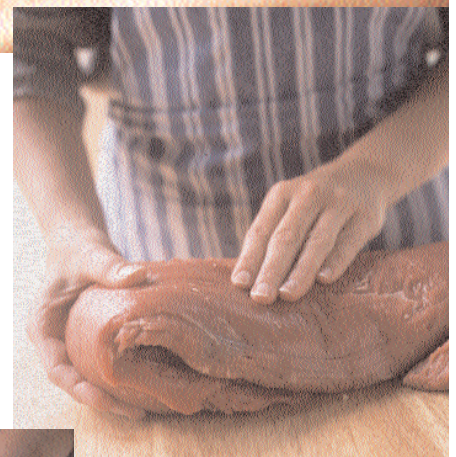
1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Trim fat from tenderloin; fold under 3 inches of small end. Rub the tenderloin with oil. Combine the breadcrumbs, parsley, pepper, and ½ teaspoon salt. Rub the tenderloin with crumb mixture; coat with cooking spray. Place tenderloin on the rack of a broiler pan or roasting pan. Insert a meat thermometer into thickest portion of tenderloin. Bake at 400° for 30 minutes. Increase oven temperature to 425° (do not remove roast from oven). Bake an additional 10 minutes or until the thermometer registers 140° (medium-rare) to 155° (medium). Place the tenderloin on a platter, and cover with foil. Let stand 10 minutes for tenderloin to reabsorb juices. (Temperature of roast will increase 5° upon standing.)
3. Combine ¼ teaspoon salt, the sour cream, and the remaining ingredients in a small bowl. Serve with the beef. Yield: 16 servings (serving size: 3 ounces beef and 1 tablespoon horseradish sauce).

CALORIES 195 (39% from fat); FAT 8.4g (sat 3.2g, mono 3.4g, poly 0.4g); PROTEIN 25.3g; CARB 2.4g; FIBER 0.2g; CHOL 71mg; IRON 3.2mg; SODIUM 193mg; CALC 12mg

MORE RECIPES ON PAGE 140



Trim any excess fat from the tenderloin. You'll notice that the end is tapered and much thinner than the middle section, so fold the end under enough to approximate the thickness of the middle. This encourages even cooking and prevents the end from overcooking.



Rub beef with a mixture of breadcrumbs, parsley, pepper, and salt. This creates a flavorful crust.

Because heat

draws moisture to the surface of the roast, cover it and let it stand for 10 minutes before carving. This helps the roast reabsorb the juices.



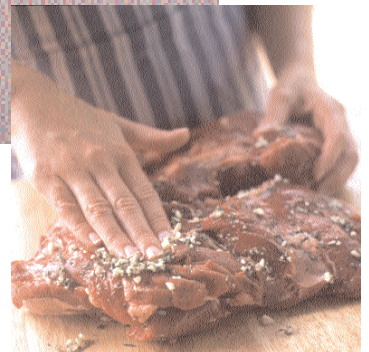
**▲ Mediterranean Roasted Leg of Lamb
With Red Wine Sauce**

The drippings from the roast are combined with red wine to make a flavorful sauce that complements the lamb perfectly. Use a full-bodied, dry red wine such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, or Cabernet Franc. Increasing the oven temperature for the last 20 minutes browns the lamb.

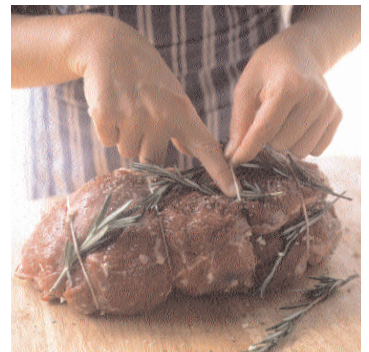
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| 1 (5½- to 6-pound) rolled boned leg of lamb | 2 garlic cloves, minced |
| 1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary | ⅛ teaspoon black pepper |
| ¾ teaspoon kosher salt, divided | 1 tablespoon olive oil |
| | 6 rosemary sprigs |
| | 2 cups dry red wine, divided |
| | 1½ tablespoons cornstarch |

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Unroll roast; trim fat. Spread minced rosemary, ¼ teaspoon salt, and garlic into folds of the roast. Reroll roast; secure at 3-inch intervals with heavy string. Sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon salt and pepper. Drizzle with oil. Secure rosemary sprigs under strings on roast. Place roast on the rack of a broiler pan or roasting pan; insert meat thermometer into thickest portion of roast. Bake at 400° for 1 hour. Increase oven temperature to 425° (do not remove roast from oven). Bake an additional 20 minutes or until thermometer registers 140° (medium-rare) to 155° (medium). Place roast on a platter; cover with foil. Let stand 10 minutes for roast to reabsorb juices. (Temperature of roast will increase 5° upon standing.) Remove string and rosemary sprigs before slicing.
3. Remove rack from pan. Combine ½ cup wine and cornstarch; set aside. Add ½ cup wine to drippings in pan; scrape pan to loosen browned bits. Combine drippings mixture and 1 cup wine in a saucepan; bring to a boil. Cook 5 minutes. Add ¼ teaspoon salt and cornstarch mixture; return to a boil. Cook 1 minute or until thick, stirring constantly. Serve with lamb. Yield: 19 servings (serving size: 3 ounces lamb and about 1½ tablespoons sauce).

CALORIES 175 (38% from fat); FAT 7.4g (sat 2.5g, mono 3.4g, poly 0.5g); PROTEIN 24.4g; CARB 1.1g; FIBER 0g; CHOL 76mg; IRON 1.9mg; SODIUM 153mg; CALC 10mg



Unroll the roast and trim the fat. To infuse the roast with flavor, spread with rosemary, salt, and minced garlic.



Reroll roast and secure at 3-inch intervals with string. Tuck rosemary sprigs under string.

MORE RECIPES ON PAGE 144

▼ Honey-Cumin Roasted Pork With Caramelized Onions

Although it's more costly, you can also use a boneless veal rump roast in place of the pork.

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| 1 (3-pound) boned pork loin roast | ¼ teaspoon ground red pepper |
| 3 tablespoons honey | 2 large onions (about 2 pounds), cut into 8 wedges |
| 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice | 1 cup fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth, divided |
| 1 tablespoon ground cumin | |
| 1½ teaspoons kosher salt | |

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Trim fat from pork; score a diamond pattern on top of pork. Combine the honey and the next 4 ingredients (honey through red pepper) in a small bowl. Combine 2 tablespoons honey mixture and onion wedges; toss well to combine. Place the pork on the rack of a broiler pan or roasting pan. Arrange onion wedges around pork. Brush the remaining honey mixture over pork. Insert a meat thermometer into thickest part of pork. Bake at 375° for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until thermometer registers 155° (slightly pink). Place pork on a platter, and cover with foil. Let stand 10 minutes for the pork to reabsorb juices. (Temperature of the roast will increase 5° upon standing).
3. Remove rack from pan. Add ½ cup broth to drippings in pan, scraping pan to loosen browned bits. Combine drippings mixture and ½ cup broth in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer 5 minutes. Cut pork diagonally across grain into thin slices; serve with onions and sauce. Yield: 12 servings (serving size: 3 ounces pork, about ¼ cup onions, and 1 tablespoon sauce).

CALORIES 212 (35% from fat); FAT 8.2g (sat 2.8g, mono 3.7g, poly 0.9g); PROTEIN 22.7g; CARB 11.3g; FIBER 1.5g; CHOL 62mg; IRON 1.4mg; SODIUM 403mg; CALC 28mg



The drippings from the roast make the base for a flavorful sauce or gravy. To deglaze the pan, add broth to the drippings, scraping to loosen the browned bits.

1



Then combine the drippings and additional broth in a saucepan, and simmer for 5 minutes. This reduces the sauce and concentrates its flavor.

2



A broiler-fryer

is the perfect size for serving two to four people. It cooks more quickly than a larger roasting chicken and is easier to handle.



When Your Roast Is Done

Leaner roasts, as we've used here, will be succulent if cooked medium-rare or medium. Always place the thermometer in the thickest part of the roast, away from bone or gristle, for the most accurate readings. In general, you should pull the roast from the oven at 5° below the final recommended temperature—the roast will continue to cook slightly as it rests. (The exception to this is roast chicken, which should cook fully to 180°.) Allow about 10 minutes for the roast to rest and fully reabsorb the juices. We recommend the following degrees of doneness:

Beef and lamb: medium-rare (145° internal temperature after resting) to medium (160° internal temperature after resting)

Pork: medium (160° internal temperature after resting)

Chicken: fully cooked (180° internal temperature)

About seasonings: Cooks tend to season more today than in the past; with less fat in leaner meat and chicken, you'll get a big flavor boost from spices, herbs, chiles, seasoning pastes, and breading.

Course Syllabus

Now that you know how to make all sorts of roasts, come back next month for some quick-bread making, when we show you how to make everything from muffins to scones to biscuits to coffeeecake. And don't miss out on the rest of our year-2000 series. Mark these months.

November: How to Make Plenty of Bread

December: How to Make the Ultimate Light Cookie

▲ Asian Roasted Chicken

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| 1 (3-pound) broiler-fryer chicken | 1 (16-ounce) can fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth |
| ¼ cup low-sodium soy sauce | |
| 1 tablespoon grated peeled fresh ginger | ¼ teaspoon dark sesame oil |
| 2 garlic cloves, minced | ½ cup (2-inch) sliced green onions |

1. Remove and discard giblets and neck from chicken. Rinse chicken with cold water; pat dry. Trim excess fat. Starting at neck cavity, loosen skin from breast and drumsticks by inserting fingers, gently pushing between skin and meat.
2. Combine soy sauce, ginger, garlic, and broth in a large heavy-duty zip-top plastic bag. Add chicken; seal and marinate in refrigerator 4 to 8 hours, turning bag occasionally. Remove chicken from bag, reserving ½ cup marinade.
3. Preheat oven to 375°.
4. Place chicken, breast side up, on the rack of a broiler pan or roasting pan. Insert meat thermometer into meaty part of thigh, making sure not to touch bone. Bake at 375° for 1 hour and 10 minutes or until thermometer registers 180°. Cover chicken loosely with foil; let stand 10 minutes for chicken to reabsorb juices. Discard skin.
5. Add ½ cup reserved marinade to drippings in pan (you'll have about ¼ cup drippings), scraping pan to loosen browned bits. Pour marinade mixture into a small saucepan; bring to a boil, and cook 5 minutes. Stir in sesame oil. Cut chicken into quarters. Drizzle with sesame mixture. Sprinkle with onions. Yield: 4 servings (serving size: about 3 ounces chicken and about 1 ½ tablespoons sauce).

CALORIES 226 (33% from fat); FAT 8.4g (sat 2.2g, mono 3g, poly 2g); PROTEIN 32.2g; CARB 2.3g; FIBER 0.4g; CHOL 95mg; IRON 1.5mg; SODIUM 548mg; CALC 28mg



Cookbook author Sharon Sanders is working on a book of Italian recipes and reminiscences to be published by Pergola West in spring 2001.