

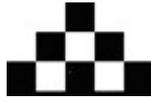
301

Venison Recipes

The Ultimate Deer Hunter's Cookbook

**Deer &
Deer Hunting**
MAGAZINE



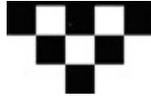


301 Venison Recipes

The Ultimate Deer Hunter's Cookbook

**DEER &
DEER HUNTING**
MAGAZINE

www.deeranddeerhunting.com



This edition published by



Krause Publications, Inc.
an imprint of F+W Media, Inc.
700 East State Street
Iola, WI 54990-0001
715-445-2214
888-457-2873
www.krausebooks.com

Copyright © 1992 by Krause Publications, Inc.
Co-Authors: Randall P. Schwalbach, Project Editor; Readers of *Deer & Deer Hunting* magazine, recipes with signatures; Bud Kilmartin, recipes without signatures; Kevin Voit, “Wines” chapter

eISBN 13: 978-1-44022-396-9
This ebook edition: October 2012

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without the written permission of the publisher. All inquiries should be addressed to *Deer & Deer Hunting* magazine, 700 E. State St. Iola, WI 54990.

Always follow safety and common-sense cooking protocol while using kitchen utensils, operating ovens and stoves, and handling uncooked food. If children are assisting in the preparation of any recipe, they should always be supervised by an adult.

Many of the designations used by manufacturers and sellers to distinguish their product are claimed as trademarks. Where those designations appear in this book and the publisher was aware of a trademark claim, the designations have been printed with initial capital letters.

Contents

Contributors

Introduction

Care of Venison, Field to Freezers

Steaks

The mainstay of the venison chef, from grilled tenderloin, to kabob, marinated steaks, chops, Swiss-style venison, Salisbury steak, pepper steak, steak in wine sauce, venison teriyaki, and more.

Barbecue and Ribs

Hearty barbecue recipes for home or deer camp. In addition, the gourmet will surely appreciate these creative treatments for ribs using Burgundy, maple, pineapple and barbecue sauces.

Roasts

Get out your Dutch Oven, your crock pot, and roasting pan to sample these many ways to prepare mouth-watering rump roasts, rounds, shoulders and legs of venison.

Soups and Stews

Whether you need to handle a famished crew in deer camp or a hungry family back home, wholesome soups and stews are guaranteed to satisfy and guard against the cold blasts of winter.

Chili

From the Adirondacks to the high plains, chili is always a popular item as a go-with or a meal in itself.

Main Dishes

Venison stroganoff, pies, casseroles, goulash, pilaf and pasta. Venison lends a tasty variation to many standard combinations and one-pot dishes.

Ethnic Traditions

Sauerbraten, Italian steak, stir-fry, venison Jurez, venison Burgundy, ragout, bulgoki, burgoo, bourguignonne, lasagna, spaghetti, Swiss and Cajun steak, burritos, gumbo, chop suey — all using venison!

[Ground Venison](#)

Transform ordinary burgers, meat loaf, and meatballs into memorable meals with the addition of ground venison.

[Sausage](#)

Easy-to-follow instructions for this standard lunch or snack item at home or deer camp.

[Jerky and Other Smoked Dishes](#)

The ultimate trail food. A few strips of homemade jerky from your deer will help take the edge off your hunger wherever you are-in the woods or the concrete jungles.

[Heart and Liver](#)

A traditional way to celebrate kills in many deer camps.

[Marinades, Sauces, and Gravies](#)

Never try to “cover up” the exquisite taste of venison, but use these to transform ordinary dishes into the elegant.

[Spreads, Salads, Appetizers](#)

Lead into wild game feasts with these creative recipes.

[Wines That Go With Venison](#)

[Check out ShopDeerHunting.com](#)

Contributors

Most wild game cookbooks feature a section on venison. In this cookbook, however, every recipe calls for venison. 301 dishes in all. You ask, how could we come up with this many different ways? Our answer: Our readers did.

We started this project by asking readers of *Deer & Deer Hunting* magazine to send us their favorite venison recipes. Over a hundred readers responded, providing a tremendous variety of recipes.

At this same time, we obtained a large collection of venison recipes from Bud Kilmartin, a hunter, trapper, and guide from New York. Kilmartin has forty-five years experience as a deer hunter and a deer camp cook. He has also owned and operated several restaurants.

Bud's recipes stress the element of simplicity, which make them especially suitable for hunting camp. Typically, Bud prepares five meals at a time, which he then freezes for future use. He strives for one-pan preparation whenever possible. Those recipes without a name underneath were supplied by Bud.

From sausage to jerky, stews to steaks, these recipes range from the simple to elegant. If you need to feed a hungry bunch at deer camp, or serve special guests in your home, look no further for creative ways to prepare hearty and delicious venison.

—1992

Introduction

In addition to hunting adventures, the wonderful white-tailed deer provides us with a truly unique food source. A staple of the pioneers and a tradition in deer camps, venison is wholesome and delicious. Some call it the “food of kings,” and the finest restaurants serve it with pride.

Tasty venison results from proper handling from the moment you kill a deer to the time you place the packaged cuts in the freezer. Proper care includes field dressing, hanging, skinning, storage and butchering.

Field Dressing

Field dressing (gutting) a deer is an extremely important step in the handling of venison. Removing the paunch, intestines and other inedible internal tissue permits the deer’s body heat to dissipate quickly, thus cooling the meat. This step remains important in either warm or cool weather.

Equally important, field dressing eliminates the possibility of stomach acids and expanding gases tainting the venison. It also helps to completely drain blood from the body cavity.

As a side benefit of field dressing, you reduce the weight of a deer by about twenty percent, making it easier to transport the deer.

Although many novice hunters think that field dressing requires special skills, it’s not really a complicated task. After working on a deer or two, you will be able to complete the chore in less than ten minutes. In truth, your greatest concern should be the safety of your own fingers working in proximity to a sharp hunting knife.

Hang the Deer

Whether you immediately transport your deer home or leave it in camp, the deer should be hung as soon as possible. Hanging a deer accomplishes two things: it facilitates cooling, and it puts the deer in a good position for skinning. Propping the body cavity open with a stick promotes even faster cooling.

Some people prefer to hang a deer head up, but the head down position remains better for several reasons. First, it allows heat to rise freely from the chest cavity. Second, it makes it easier to skin the head out, an important consideration if the deer is a trophy. (Rope burns around the head don’t improve the cape either.) Third, it reduces the amount of hair you get on the meat. Naturally, if you do not intend to save the cape, or if skinning will be done elsewhere, hanging deer by the head is fine in camp.

To hang the deer head-down, first skin out the hind legs by the hocks and insert a

stout stick or meat-hanging gambrel above the hock, between the large tendon and the bone in the hind leg. Be careful not to cut the tendon! The opening between the hock and the tendon is the only place to hook the gambrel stick.

If you insert the gambrel hook and hang the deer before you skin the hock, it is very easy to accidentally cut the tendon when making the first cuts around the hock and the deer will come crashing down. Some hunters also cut the lower leg off before the deer is hung, and in this case it is important to cut through the flat joint below the hock.

Select a shady, cool spot for hanging. If temperatures stay at or below forty to fifty degrees, the meat will stay in good condition for two or three days. Obviously, during late fall in northern states, a deer could hang longer without undesirable effect on the meat.

In southern states, however, and during early archery seasons around the country, hot daytime temperatures present a problem. The warmer the weather, the sooner the meat should be processed. Hanging the deer in a walk-in cooler is ideal, but not all deer camps have one. In that case, quarter the deer or butcher it completely and put the meat on ice. Then get it into a freezer.

A frozen deer quarter can be thawed at home for final butchering. Generally, thawing and refreezing fresh meat one time does not affect meat quality. On the other hand, cyclic freezing and thawing usually hurts the quality of venison.

Skinning

Skinning a deer accelerates cooling of the meat. Normally, skinning a deer is easiest when the carcass is still warm, so experienced hunters normally skin the deer as soon as possible or practical.

In extremely cold weather, immediate skinning is not necessary. In fact, it is beneficial in some circumstances to leave the hide on the carcass to prevent the meat from freezing. As a general principle, meat quality depends upon rapid uniform cooling of meat. Quick freezing, or repeated freezing and thawing can cause meat to be tough.

Generally you skin a deer from hocks to throat, as explained in the following step by step guide. After the deer has been skinned trim away blood-shot venison around the bullet or arrow wound. Such meat should be cut away because it tends to taint surrounding edible meat.

If you do not immediately butcher the skinned deer carcass, cover the meat with a white, commercial deer bag made out of cheesecloth. Such bags permit further cooling and air circulation, while also keeping out insects. You can discourage flies from attacking the exposed meat by liberally sprinkling black pepper on it.

After a deer is skinned, the surface meat dries to the touch, a condition known as being "glazed." In this condition, such meat will stay in good shape for two to three days if the temperatures stay moderately cool (not hotter than forty to fifty degrees).

Aging

The question of whether one should age deer meat or not remains a point of endless discussion among deer hunters, meat processors and scientists alike.

Some animal scientists view aging as impractical because so many people lack

the proper facilities. Further, so much deer meat unfortunately winds up in sausage anyway, so why age it? Aging skinned deer meat all too frequently results in excessive weight loss, dehydration and discoloration of the lean tissue because of the lack of fat cover.

Under improper conditions the meat becomes susceptible to deterioration by bacteria and mold growth. Further, since hunters shoot a large number of young animals with naturally tender meat (a majority of all deer shot today average only 1.5 to 2.5 years old) aging seems unnecessary in the opinion of some animal scientists and meat processors.

Most meat processors agree upon the difficulty of properly aging venison without a refrigerated cooler. Without a cooler, one has to rely on weather for the aging process. The obvious problem then is the constant fluctuation of temperatures, from below thirty degrees Fahrenheit (which freezes meat and prevents aging) to over forty degrees Fahrenheit (which dehydrates and spoils meat). Cyclic freezing and thawing, meat processors generally agree, produces poor quality venison.

Animal scientists define the aging of meat as the practice of holding the carcass at temperatures of thirty-four to thirty-seven degrees Fahrenheit with a relative humidity of eighty-eight percent for seven to nine days. Such aging allows the enzymes in the meat to break down some of the complex proteins, a process that usually improves flavor and tenderness.

Recommended aging times vary from five to fourteen days. The higher the temperature, the shorter the time. Usually, the hide remains on the carcass to prevent excessive loss of moisture.

Some people “age” venison during the thawing process preparatory to cooking the meat, by letting the wrapped cuts thaw slowly in a cold refrigerator for a period of up to five days. This is a practical alternative to other methods of aging, as the temperature inside a refrigerator is normally consistent—a key to proper aging.

Palatability of Venison

Many factors affect the taste and tenderness of venison:

- age of deer
- sex of deer
- diet
- winter severity
- parasites
- stress on animal before
- shot placement
- stress on animal while trailing
- field dressing technique and immediacy of
- handling from field to home
- hanging
- aging of meat
- method of butchering
- packaging, freezing, and duration of storage

- length and manner of cooking

Butchering

In the absence of experience or a willing instructor, most hunters take their deer to a local processor to have it butchered, for a fee. In most cases, however, even the novice ends up with better quality venison when he butchers his deer himself. Several reasons apply.

For one thing, when you butcher a deer that you harvested, you know the meat comes from your deer. Also, you can take as much time as you like to remove hair, blood, gristle and fat in order to make the finished product more enjoyable. Further, you can debone the deer as much as you wish, thus saving valuable freezer space.

Completely removing all bones represents the easiest way to butcher a deer. Surprisingly, it takes very little practice to become proficient at “boning,” and you don’t need any special tools other than a sharp, stiff knife and a steel to keep it sharp. With the deer hung, remove the front legs and shoulders first. Then remove the loin or back strap. Next cut off rib meat for grinding. Finally, remove the hind quarters and cut into round steaks and rump roasts.

Butchering an animal you personally harvested provides personal satisfaction. As the completion of an age-old ritual, when the steaks are sizzling or the stew is bubbling, you will know exactly where that meat came from.

As a side benefit, the butchering process also offers an opportunity for you to become familiar with deer physiology. This knowledge naturally translates into better understanding of shot placement—thus ensuring future clean kills.

General Suggestions

1. Cool venison as quickly as possible after killing a deer.
2. Immediately on returning to camp with a deer, remove the tenderloins found inside the body cavity.
3. Trim venison of all fat, membranes and connecting tissue before freezing or cooking.
4. Freezing meat in “chunks” or sections, as opposed to individual steaks, helps to retain moisture. Further, well-chilled or semi-frozen meat is also easier to slice than room-temperature meat. For these reasons, divide each loin strap into four or five sections, wrap and freeze. Do the same with the round. To determine the size of the chunks, use a scale or try to visualize the number of steaks you will slice from a section.
5. Venison should thaw slowly to prevent toughness. Venison roast, stew and casseroles should cook slowly and with a cover.
6. Venison steaks, roast, stew and casseroles must be served hot and the balance kept hot without burning. It prevents a waxy taste.

Steaks

Venison Marinade

1-1/2 inch thick venison steak (hind quarters) or 4-1/2 inch thick slices from tenderloin, or 2 cups cubed meat for stews or stir-fry

Add:

1 cup dry red wine (burgundy preferred)

3 tablespoons light soy sauce

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

1 tablespoon fresh ground pepper

1/4 cup apple juice (cider or apple jack)

2 tablespoons dry garlic chips

1/2 teaspoon powdered fennel

Marinate for 24 hours, turning 3 or 4 times. Remove meat and cook as you would for the recipe you prefer. My favorite is below.

For tenderloin sauce:

Remove tenderloins from solid piece cutting them in 1 inch slices. Flatten to 1/2-inch and roll with a rolling pin to give a bigger cooking surface. Marinate 4 hours in above marinade. Remove meat; reserve liquid for sauce. Saute in 1 tablespoon butter or margarine and 2 tablespoons olive oil that has been heated to HOT. Sear each piece on both sides. Salt and pepper each side. Remove meat and keep warm. Add reserve marinade, 1/4 cup beef or veal stock or just plain water. Reduce to 1/2 volume. Add 1 pat of butter or margarine to slightly thicken. Pour over tenderloins.

—*H. M. Balch, Erie, PA*

Favorite Steak Sandwiches

2 pounds venison round steak, cut into serving size pieces

Marinate overnight in:

Milk

Flour

Salt and pepper

Garlic powder

Minced onion flakes

Stick of butter or margarine

1 long loaf French bread

Salt & pepper meat; dredge in flour. Brown in small amount of oil in skillet over medium heat. After meat is browned add 1/2 cup water and cook over low heat until tender.

Slice bread lengthwise, spread butter or margarine on each side. Sprinkle with garlic powder and minced onion flakes.

Lay slices of meat on bottom half; top with other half of bread. Wrap in foil. Heat in 300 degree oven until bread is heated through and margarine is melted.

Cut into serving size sandwiches. Serve with sliced onions, pickles and peppers.

—*Donna Toms, Danville, IL*

Grilled Tenderloin

Marinade:

1/4 cup red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon ketchup
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon olive oil
Nature's Seasoning to taste
Pepper to taste

Cut tenderloin across grain of meat approximately 1/2-inch thick. Soak steaks in marinade for 2 hours at room temperature. Place on hot charcoal grill and cook accordingly.

—*Michael L. Bankhead, Great Falls, SC*

Venison Steak

4–5 pieces of venison steak per person
6–8 pieces of bacon
2 large onions, sliced
1/2 teaspoon sugar
Lemon and pepper seasoning to taste

Fry the bacon. Set aside in a heated dish. In the pan, leave 2–3 tablespoons bacon drippings. Add the onions and sugar. Simmer until tender, add the bacon slices to rewarm if necessary. Remove both to heated covered dish. Sprinkle both sides of meat liberally with lemon and pepper seasoning. Add 1–2 tablespoons bacon drippings to electric frying pan and heat to about 300 or medium high heat. The flavor of venison is best when it's slightly pink. Have your watch with the second hand ready. Your timing depends on the thickness of your steaks. For 1/2-inch tenderloins, fry them about 1 minute on each side. Your timing begins as you place them in the frying pan, turn them in the same order. I always check the first piece to see if it's cooked sufficiently.

It's better to under cook. Remove steak to heated, covered serving dish.

—Maren Wegner, *Blue Mounds, WI*

Breaded Chops

8–10 small deer chops
1 egg slightly beaten
1/2 cup milk
4 tablespoons margarine or bacon fat
Italian seasoned fine bread crumbs

Mix egg and milk together. Melt 2 tablespoons margarine in skillet. Dip chops into egg and milk mixture, then coat with bread crumbs. Fry in margarine until brown. Add 2 tablespoons more margarine and turn chops. Fry until done. Serve on a warm platter.

—*Mary Lou Spies, Henderson, MD*

Venison Steak Teriyaki

Marinade:

3/4 cup vegetable oil

1/4 cup soy sauce

1/4 cup honey

2 tablespoons vinegar

1 medium onion, finely chopped

1 large clove garlic, finely chopped

1-1/2 teaspoons ground ginger

1-3 pounds venison steaks, chops or back strap or butterfly steaks, 1/2-inch to 3/4-inch thick.

Marinade: Mix all ingredients (except venison) in a large mixing bowl. Pour a small amount of thoroughly mixed marinade into a shallow glass dish or marinade container. Arrange venison in marinade dish and pour remaining marinade over meat. Cover and refrigerate for 24 to 48 hours. Turn steaks every 12 hours.

Preheat grill or broiler. Grill or broil steaks over a high heat approximately 3 minutes on each side. Remove steaks and test, by slicing into thickest part of steak. Cook until pink in center. Do not over cook.

—*Dan Murphy, Old Bridge, NJ*

Salisbury Steak

1-1/2 pounds ground venison
2 cans beefy mushroom soup
1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
1 egg, slightly beaten
1/4 cup onions, chopped fine
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1/2 cup water

Mix thoroughly: 1/4 cup soup, venison, bread crumbs, egg, onion and pepper. Shape firmly into 6 patties.

In skillet brown patties; pour off fat. Stir in remaining soup and 1/2 cup water. Cover. Cook over low heat 20 minutes or until done. Stir occasionally. Serve with mashed potatoes and use the soup as gravy for potatoes. Serves 6.

—*Ed Baugrud, Neenah, WI*

Venison Steak Sandwiches

Venison steak
Butter
Cast iron fry pan

Cut steak in small pieces. Fry in butter turning often until done (I suggest medium).
Serve on toast with onions or any sandwich toppings.

—*Eunice Clausing, Neenah, WI*

Venison Grand Marnier

6 ounces Grand Marnier
6 ounces orange juice concentrate
6 ounce white wine
2 cups beef stock
6 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon fresh basil
1 tablespoon onion, minced
6 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons oil
Pinch of rosemary
1/2 pound mushrooms (optional)
1-1/2 pounds loin or round steak, cut into thin strips or chunks
Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients except butter, flour and beef stock. Allow venison to marinate at least 4–5 hours.

Remove venison from marinade and brown in butter in a heavy skillet until done. This only takes 1–2 minutes. Do not overcook.

Remove venison. Brown 6 tablespoons butter over low heat, stir in flour and continue stirring until a deep mahogany brown color appears.

Add beef stock and remaining marinade mixture and heat until thickened. Remove from heat. You may wish to stir in more Grand Marnier according to your taste. This sauce is best if prepared a day in advance. Heat gently with the meat and serve over noodles or rice.

—*Hal Featherman, Mumford, NY*