

Overcooking game will ruin your meal

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higher in protein and vitamins and lower in fat than meats of domestic animals.

"The real trick to any wild game is if you overcook it, you've ruined it," said Holmes, recommending home chefs use a meat thermometer to monitor meat while cooking.

Although he didn't bring anything home this year, Huntley is a seasoned chef and hunter of game meat. He says where you hunt determines the flavour of the beast.

"It's the old saying, 'You are what you eat.' If the venison is from a swamp, it will be a little more gamey," said Huntley. "If the animal is from south central Ontario, where they can eat a lot of straw, hay and corn, grazing on it, (the meat) will taste more mild compared to Northern Ontario, where there is little farm land and they will get more hardwood and scrub. They are leaner, but also gamier."

Venison can produce delicately tender roasts and steaks if it's from a young animal. For an older animal, slow and moist cooking is required for tender results.

Venison fat often has a strong odour and flavour, so remove all fat from the meat before cooking, replacing it with bacon strips.

To roast a tender cut of venison, place meat on a rack in a shallow pan and roast at 325F until well done. Baste frequently with pan drippings.

Both moose and venison may be marinated for extra flavour and moistness (see recipe section).

Moose generally does not have a strong gamey flavour and is easily digestible and of excellent nutrition value.

DID YOU KNOW?

■ Wild game will last up to one year in the freezer. After that, the lean meat will be compromised by the drying effects of being frozen.

■ If you can find it, pick up George McQuarrie's *Your Game To Keep*, a wild game cookbook published by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

■ Timber Creek Lodge Wild Game Festival ends Nov. 22. The restaurant is located at 5328 Hwy. 7 in Markham. (905) 471-1900.

■ The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters operates a Hunters for the Harvest program, encouraging hunters to donate portions of their hunt to food banks across the province. To find out more, call (705) 748-6324.

RECIPES

Roast partridge breasts

1 partridge breast per person

1 slice bacon per partridge breast

Place partridge breasts in covered roasting pan and top each breast with a slice of bacon.

Roast in covered pan 1 hour at 325F or until meat is tender. (Older birds may take longer.)

A tablespoon of red currant jelly or crabapple jelly allowed to melt over the breasts during the last few minutes of cooking is elegant.

Stephen Huntley's moose or venison roast

In a crock pot, place roast with the following ingredients:

1 can tomato soup

3 tsp brown sugar

3 tsp lemon juice or wine vinegar

1 tbsp worchestire sauce

3 tbsp ketchup

1/2 to 1 tsp dried mustard

1/2 to 1 tsp garlic salt

1/2 tsp soya sauce

Mix ingredients and pour over meat in crock pot, cook for five hours.

Venison steak marinade

1/2 cup dry red wine

1/4 tsp ground cardamom

1/3 cup salad oil

3 tbsp soy sauce

See RECIPES, page 18

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