

Herb-Crusted Elk Loin with a Port/Cabernet Wine Sauce

Preparation Time: 1½ Hours
Servings: 8
Wine Pairing: Kitchak Cellars *Concerto, Napa Valley, ToKalon Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon.*

Inspiration: Back from the fall hunt, we, like our forefathers generations ago, enjoy a wild game feast of Elk. The only difference is that we can get the elk loin at the local butcher if we ask a bit in advance.

Ingredients:

2.5 pounds of elk loin (better if two loins instead of one)
1 tablespoon each finely chopped fresh rosemary, oregano, thyme and sage.
4 garlic cloves finely chopped
Olive oil
1 teaspoon sea salt
½ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper

Port Wine Sauce

2 cups good Cabernet Sauvignon or Cabernet Franc wine
1 750 ml bottle of ruby port wine
½ cup sugar
½ cup Demi-glace
1 ½ cups pineapple juice

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Mix herbs with garlic, ¼ cup olive oil, salt and pepper and set aside.

Elk Loin: In an ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat, add one teaspoon of olive oil. When pan is very hot, add the elk loin and sear on all sides until brown, about 6 minutes. Remove from pan and carefully roll the loins in the herb mixture. Rub as necessary to distribute evenly. Place loins back in pan and put in pre-heated oven until medium rare (130°F), about 13-15 minutes. Remove from oven and let rest, covered with foil for about 5 minutes before slicing. This allows the juices to re-distribute throughout the meat, and the temperature will rise to 135°F. Caution: Game meat is best served medium-rare. Overcooking elk will result in a dry gamy taste. If your loins have thin ends and a thick middle, cut off the ends and cook separately to avoid overcooking.

Port/Cabernet Wine Sauce: Pour all ingredients into a 2.5 or 3-quart saucepan and stir. Simmer vigorously over medium-high heat until the mixture reduces to about 1.5 cups and is thick and syrupy, about 40 minutes depending on heat. Keep warm and pour over meat prior to serving.

Serve with your favorite potato gratin and haricots verts.

