

STUFFED PORK TENDERLOIN

Ingredients:

1 Large Pork Tenderloin, 1 – 2 lbs.	7 oz. Baby Spinach
4 T Olive Oil	1 C Cheese Crumbles
1 t Black Pepper, fresh ground	1/2 t Salt
1/2 C Onion, chopped	1 pt. Grape Tomatoes (optional)

Directions:

Sautéing the Spinach

1. Wash the spinach.
2. Heat 2 T of the olive oil in a large skillet over high heat.
3. Add the onion and cook for 1 minute.
4. Add the spinach, pushing it down into the skillet, and 1/8 t salt and 1/2 t pepper. Cover and cook over medium heat for about 1 1/2 minutes, until the spinach is wilted.
5. Remove the lid and cook, uncovered, until the liquid from the spinach has evaporated. Transfer to a plate and let cool.

Butterflying the Tenderloin

To butterfly the tenderloin, you will need to make parallel cuts from opposite sides of the loin. The first cut will be in the top third of the loin and the second cut will be in the bottom third of the loin. You will not cut all the way through the loin with either cut as you are merely trying to unfold the loin like a book, or a tri-fold pamphlet.

Additionally, you want the loin slices to be of three equal thicknesses. Here's how:

1. Trim the tenderloin of any fat and silverskin. *Silverskin is a slippery, almost paper-thin, piece of connective tissue.*
2. Lay the loin on the cutting board so that it is perpendicular to you (i.e. pointing away from you).
3. Now, holding your knife so the blade is parallel to the loin, cut two-thirds to three-quarters of the way through the loin, at approximately the top third line of the loin, the entire length of the tenderloin stopping when you are about one-half to three-eighths of an inch from the other side.
4. Pull the piece back that you have just cut to reveal the first third of the book.
5. Now, turn the cutting board, not the tenderloin, so the uncut side is closest to your cutting hand, and place your knife on the loin where the first cut stopped. Your knife-edge should be headed the opposite direction of the end cut.

6. Now make the second cut diagonally down through the remaining loin piece away from the open book page stopping when you are about one-half to three-eighths of an inch from the other side.

The tenderloin should now open up like a book.

Cooking the Tenderloin

1. Open up the butterflied tenderloin and pound it a little to extend it to about 12 x 8 inches wide. You may need to use a rolling pin.
2. Preheat the oven to 350-degrees.
3. Arrange half the spinach mixture down the center of the butterflied tenderloin and top with the cheese.
4. Add the rest of the spinach, fold in the sides, and roll the tenderloin back and forth to evenly distribute and encase the filling.
5. Using twist ties made of aluminum foil, or cooking string, secure the tenderloin to keep it from unrolling when searing.
6. Heat the remaining 2 T oil in a large ovenproof nonstick skillet.
7. Sprinkle the outside of the tenderloin with 1/8 t salt and 1/2 t pepper.
8. Place the tenderloin carefully in the skillet and brown it, turning occasionally, for about 5 minutes.
9. Carefully remove the foil strips from the tenderloin and bake in the oven for 10 minutes, when it will be slightly pink in the center.
10. Transfer the tenderloin to a plate, cover, and keep warm while you prepare the tomatoes (the pork will continue to cook as it sits). Allow to rest for at least 5-7 minutes.
11. (Optional) In the skillet you browned, and cooked, the tenderloin, add the tomatoes and salt and pepper to taste.
12. (Optional) Sauté over high heat for 1 1/2 to 2 minutes, until just softened. (Add wine or water if more liquid is needed)
13. Slice the tenderloin crosswise into as many medallions as possible - about 1/2 to 3/4 inch thick depending on the total number of guests.
14. (Optional) Garnish with the sautéed tomatoes.