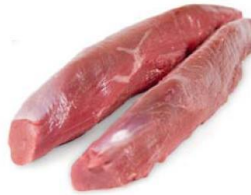


Smoked Venison Tenderloin Recipe



Smoked Venison Tenderloin:

The back-strap runs along the spine of the deer and contains very little connective tissue or fat. It is lean, has a texture similar to filet mignon and because of its thickness, is excellent for smoking. Smoking is by far my favorite preparation method for this cut of meat. Without question, the key for tender and flavorful smoked wild game is to incorporate a brine into the preparation. A brine is essentially a marinade with a high salt and sugar content that elicits a specific reaction within the meat.

Two main processes are at work in brine:

- 1) **First**, meat is largely devoid of salt, so when immersed in a salty water solution the process of osmosis kicks into action and the area with less salt concentration (the meat) pulls the saltwater solution into the meat and hydrates it. This helps to keep the meat juicier over the several hours smoking process.
- 2) **Second**, the introduction of salt into the meat causes a breakdown of certain proteins within the meat. This breakdown makes the extremely lean venison much tenderer than it would be without this process.

Here is a basic brine recipe to try to make one-gallon of brine for **venison tenderloins**. This should be adequate to cover one whole back-strap.

1 Gallon of Water
¾ Cup of Salt
½ cup of regular (not reduced sodium!) soy sauce
¼ Worcestershire sauce
½ cup of brown sugar
½ cup of molasses
1 tbs. rosemary
2 tbs. pepper

Put this mixture in a ziplock bag along with the back-strap such that the meat is completely covered in the brine. Let this stand refrigerated for at least 12 hours but no more than 24.

Once you're ready to smoke the venison, liberally apply Three Little Pig's Memphis rub across the entire tenderloin, and prepare several strips of thick cut bacon to wrap the back-strap. As the meat smokes, the bacon fat will drip down over the meat and keep the venison from losing valuable moisture.

Place the venison tenderloins on The Good-One Smoker with (2) chunks of Wild Cherry flavor wood and smoke at 250 degrees for around 2 hours or until the tenderloin reaches your preferred cooking range, but a good gauge is to shoot for 140 internal meat temperature.

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