

TENDERLOIN - PUFF PASTRY WRAPPED

F EASY

Last Modified: 08/21/2014

PREP: 1 To 2 Hrs
COOK: 45 Min
OVEN: 400

BEEF

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

QUA	MEASURE	INGREDIENT	PROCESS
4 ~ 5	Pounds	Beef Tenderloin (Prime Grade)	Trimmed
2	17.3 Oz	Boxes Frozen Puff Pastry Dough (Sheets)	
3	Large	Red Onions	Thin Sliced
2	Tbsp	Unsalted Butter	
1	Pinch	Granulated Sugar	
2	Tbsp	Armagnac Brandy	
1	Tbsp	Olive Oil	
1	Large	Egg	Beaten
1 +/-	Pinches	Kosher Salt	To Taste
1 +/-	Pinches	Fresh Ground Black Pepper	To Taste

PREPARATION

FACTOID	This is my quick-and-dirty version of Beef Wellington using refrigerated instead of fresh-made pastry dough.
HINTS	Sealing in a Pastry Dough, makes for an extremely flavorful and tender Steak. Any flavors included within the Pastry are forced into the Meat by steam.
DRY AGEING BEEF	Pat the Tenderloin dry with paper towels, hand rub the entire surface with Kosher Salt and place it on a wire rack in a shallow pan with a paper towel in the bottom to catch any drippings (change the drippings towel DAILY). Set it uncovered in the bottom (coldest) shelf of a refrigerator for a minimum of 1 day and a maximum of 4 days. Just prior to roasting, thinly shave off any pieces of exterior meat that have become completely dehydrated (REALLY funky looking) before cooking. Odds are you will not have to trim it at all. An 8 pound roast will lose well over 1/2 pound during this most important process.
OPTION	Using extremely lean and tender cuts of Venison Steak also works very well for this dish.
OPTION	While the Armagnac Brandy will be difficult to find, the soft caramel flavor hints infused by it in this dish are well worth the trip. You may substitute any nice VS Cognac if it becomes <u>absolutely</u> necessary.
FACTOID	The frozen Puff Pastry Dough (<u>NOT</u> Phyllo Dough) comes in what looks like thick sheets of paper, either folded or rolled loosely and encased in plastic wrap. Thaw the Dough overnight in the refrigerator. Mess with the Dough only at the last possible moment. Carefully remove the plastic, and work with the Dough as quickly as you can. The dryer it gets, the harder it becomes to work with. DO NOT leave the Dough exposed to the air any longer than is necessary.
HINTS	You want to purchase the thick-end (Chateaubriand) of a Beef Tenderloin. And slice it into 6 even thickness Steaks. You may also simply purchase 6 even sized pre-cut Steaks from your Butcher.
CAUTION	If you decide to purchase an untrimmed Beef Tenderloin in Cryovac, you MUST prepare and trim it according to the instructions in RON'S GOLD PLATED COOKING FACTOIDS (Page 2) under BEEF TENDERLOIN.

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TOOLS	1) 2 - Small Mixing Bowls 2) Food Processor OR Blender 3) Basting Brush 4) Large Non-Stick Skillet 5) Large Aluminum Sheet Pan 6) Pizza Wheel Cutter 7) Instant Read Thermometer
PREP	DISH 1) Cut the Red Onions in half through the root and thinly slice them and set them aside. 2) Beat the Egg until there are no white streaks visible and set it aside. 3) Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
1	2 Hours Before: Liberally season the Meat all over with Salt and Pepper. In a large non-stick frying pan over the highest possible heat, add in the Olive Oil. When the Oil just begins to smoke, put in the Steaks (NOT TOUCHING) and sear them for 1 minute on each side. USE TONGS ONLY TO HANDLE - NO HOLES IN THE MEAT. Remove and set them aside until cold to the touch.
2	1 Hour Before: In the same skillet over medium heat, gently cook the Onions with the Butter, Sugar and a large pinch of Salt for 20 minutes while stirring until <u>very</u> caramelized and soft. Add the Armagnac and cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes until the Onions become drier (it becomes almost a thick paste).
3	1 Hour Before: Leave the Onions to cool for 10 minutes before blending them into a smooth paste in a food processor. Refrigerate them for about an hour until cold (or freeze for speed).
4	In a small mixing bowl make the Egg Wash by beating the Egg and 2 Tbsp cold water until well mixed. Set it aside
5	Line the bottom of a sheet pan with parchment paper. Between two other sheets of parchment paper, roll out the Puff Pastry Dough to 1/5 of an inch in thickness. OK, OK - Plus or minus a bit - OBSERVATION during cooking will "fix" any thickness inconsistencies (See FIX note below). For each piece of Steak cut two Pastry rectangles slightly larger all around than each of the Steaks.
6	Place 6 Pastry Rectangles on the parchment paper in the sheet pan. Set aside the remaining 6 matching Rectangles.
7	Brush each piece of Steak with the Dijon Mustard on both sides, then place it in the center of each piece of Pastry on the sheet pan.
8	Spread the top the Steak evenly with a heaping tablespoon of the Onion Mixture. Brush the Egg Wash around the Pastry edges and cover with another piece of Pastry. Press the edges firmly to seal the parcel using a damp fork, then lightly trim off the excess Pastry to leave roughly a 1/2 Inch flat border all around the outside. Repeat for the remaining five Steaks.
9	Cut a little cross (or your personal baked-goods signature) through the top of each parcel to allow steam to escape and brush the Pastry top and edges heavily with the Egg Wash.
NOTE	You can "glue" a few little extra spare pieces of Pastry on top of each parcel using Egg Wash. Cut them into little fancy shapes (stars, strips, twists, etc.).
FACTOID	Any cut Pastry edges that have Egg Wash on them will be glued shut and will NOT puff up during baking. You DO want to glue the edges of each packet closed here, but NOT the edges of any fancy shapes you attach.

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10	Bake for 10 to 12 minutes for rare or 12 to 15 minutes for medium rare. Use an instant read meat thermometer, stuck into one of the slits to test for doneness. Remove from the oven, tent with aluminum foil and rest for five minutes before serving.
FIX	To make up for differing Puff Pastry thicknesses, look at the Dough OFTEN during the baking process. The Dough will bubble and move like it is alive, but the many layers are just in the process of separating. You want to end up with a nice golden brown color at the end of the cooking time.
SERVE	Serve while hot with a couple of Vegetables of choice on the side.