

The Main Event: Main Dishes Inspired by Henderson House

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- German Hamburger
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- Johnny's Favorite Overnight Blueberry French Toast

Caren's Easy Skillet Meatloaf

From Caren Simpson McVicker, Author of *Henderson House*

Now that my husband and I are empty nesters, I'm always on the lookout for quick recipes that yield a smaller number of servings. This easy skillet meatloaf checks all the boxes. It cooks in 30 minutes and is a perfect meal for two people with leftovers the next day. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

Loaf:

1 ½ pounds ground beef

1 egg

¼ cup milk

1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce

½ cup breadcrumbs

½ packet of onion soup mix

2 tbsp ketchup

Glaze:

⅓ cup ketchup

Pinch of brown sugar

2 tsp cider vinegar

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a bowl combine the loaf ingredients and mix well—I use a potato masher to mix my loaf.
3. Press the meat mixture into a 10.25-inch cast iron skillet.
4. Bake 25-30 minutes on the center rack of the over.
5. Pour off excess fat.
6. Mix glaze in a small dish and spread over loaf.
7. Broil for 3 minutes.

SERVES: 3-4 people, or 2 people with leftovers

Opa's Meatloaf - Falscher Hase or Hackfleisch

From Courtney Callo, owner of Willoughby's Depot Eatery

I grew up having delicious German meatloaf and hamburgers that my native-born grandfather would make. He was born in the northern German city of Hannover and meat was a major staple in his family cuisine. When he moved to the US, he brought a couple family recipes with him. When my dad was in middle school and high school, my grandmother worked on Friday evenings and my grandfather was in charge of dinner. He would often make his German Meatloaf or German Hamburger which became family favorites. My father had the Deutsches Beefsteak on our menu at Skyline Inn on Mount Equinox in Southern Vermont.

INGREDIENTS:

¾ pound ground beef
¾ pound ground pork
1 large kaiser roll
3 onions
6 slices of fatty bacon
2-3 tablespoons of lard or cooking fat
2 eggs
Salt and pepper
Small pinch of coriander and marjoram
½-1 cup of beef stock
½ cup of sour cream

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.
2. Mix the ground beef with the ground pork.
3. Soak the roll, press out the moisture, and add to the ground meat.
4. Dice the 2 onions.
5. Cut the bacon into tiny squares and heat up 1 tablespoon of the lard/cooking fat and fry the bacon and onions until both are translucent. Add them to the chopped meat and mix.
6. Add the eggs and knead all the ingredients together, then season with salt and pepper and spices.
7. The old-fashioned way that my grandfather cooked the meatloaf was to heat the remaining lard in a cast iron skillet and put the loaf of meat in that in the oven. He would bake for ten minutes and then put onion slices around the meatloaf and pour ¾ beef stock over the meatloaf and bake for 45 minutes - basting frequently with the remaining stock.
8. When finished, remove the loaf and deglaze the pan scraping up any browned particle from the sides and bottom with the remaining stock. Stir the pan juices with the sour cream to make a sauce for the meatloaf.

SERVES: 4-6 people

Deutsches Beefsteak - German Hamburger

From Courtney Callo, owner of Willoughby's Depot Eatery

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds lean ground beef
1 onion
2 eggs
2 tablespoons minced parsley
2 teaspoons salt
Dash of black pepper
2 tablespoons melted butter
3 tablespoons flour
2 tablespoons butter/fat for frying

Note: Parsley is key ingredient to my grandfather's recipe. My father would also add a dash of Maggi seasoning, which is available at most grocery stores.

1. My grandfather and my dad both put the ground beef through a meat grinder. I have put it in my food processor. This is important to make sure that the meat is finely blended. I do that first, take it out and chop the onion and parsley very fine and then put the meat back into the food chopper and blend all together.
2. After the meat, onions and parsley are blended, mix thoroughly with the eggs, salt, dash of pepper, melted butter and flour. You can mix in the food processor or with your hands. Shape the meat mixture into equal-sized patties.
3. Heat butter or fat in a large skillet and add the meat patties. If you want the hamburgers rare, fry first side 4 or 5 minutes, and second side 3 or 4 minutes. If you want them more medium to well done, fry slowly or they will be too brown on the outside by the time the centers are finished.

We served the Deutsches Beefsteak with various potato sides. My dad would make a little sauce with the beef stock and maggi seasoning to spoon over the patties.

SERVES: 8 people

RECIPE: Classic Pot Roast

Adapted from The Pioneer Woman (and fun fact, Ree Drummond is from Bartlesville!)

INGREDIENTS:

4 to 5 lb. whole chuck roast
2 to 3 tbsp. olive oil
2 whole onions
6 to 8 whole carrots
Kosher salt and pepper, to taste
1 c. red wine (optional, you can use beef broth instead)
2 to 3 c. beef stock
3 sprigs fresh thyme, or more to taste
3 sprigs fresh rosemary, or more to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Choose a nicely marbled piece of meat. This will enhance the flavor of your pot roast like nothing else. Generously salt and pepper your chuck roast.
2. Preheat the oven to 275°. Heat a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Then, add 2 to 3 tablespoons of olive oil.
3. Cut two onions in half and cut 6 to 8 carrots into 2-inch slices. When the oil in the pot is very hot, add in the halved onions, browning them on one side and then the other. Remove the onions to a plate.
4. Throw the carrots into the same very hot pan and toss them around a bit until slightly browned, about a minute or so. Remove them to the plate with the onions.
5. Add a bit more olive oil if needed. Place the meat in the pan and sear it for about a minute on all sides until it is nice and brown all over. Remove the roast to a plate.
6. With the burner still on high, use either red wine or beef broth (about 1 cup) to deglaze the pan, scraping the bottom to get all the yummy bits.
7. When the bottom of the pan is sufficiently deglazed, place the roast back into the pan and add enough beef stock to cover the meat halfway (about 2 to 3 cups). Add in the onion and the carrots, as well as 3 or 4 sprigs of fresh rosemary and about 3 sprigs of fresh thyme.
8. Put the lid on, then roast in the oven for 3 hours (for a 3-pound roast). For a 4- to 5-pound roast, plan on 4 hours.

SERVES: 10

RECIPE: Johnny's Favorite Overnight Blueberry French Toast

Adapted from *Taste of Home*

In the novel, Edna stops by unexpectedly with fresh blueberries so Mrs. Henderson can make Johnny's favorite – Overnight Blueberry French Toast. I tried several recipes for Overnight French Toast, but this simple one felt exactly like what Mrs. H would make on a Saturday night in anticipation of a Sunday brunch after church. The first recorded use of the word brunch is attributed to Guy Beringer in 1896 in a publication of *Hunter's Weekly*. His plea was for England to embrace lighter post-church meals. Brunch gained popularity in the United States in the 1930s, so it seemed fitting that Edna and Mrs. H might occasionally skip the heavy meats of a Sunday dinner in favor for brunch every once in a while.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup butter, cubed
1 cup packed brown sugar
12 slices French bread (1 inch thick)
7 large eggs
1-3/4 cups milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 cups fresh blueberries (or frozen unsweetened blueberries, thawed.)
Powdered sugar
Maple syrup

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a small saucepan, melt butter over medium heat.
2. Remove from heat; whisk in brown sugar.
3. Spread into a greased 13x9-in. baking dish
4. Top with French bread slices.
5. In a bowl, whisk eggs, milk, vanilla, cinnamon and salt and pour over bread.
6. Refrigerate, covered, overnight (or at least several hours so the bread can soak up the yummy egg mixture.)
7. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350°. Remove casserole from refrigerator while oven heats.
8. Turn bread slices over. (This is important because it gets the brown sugar on top for baking.)
9. Bake, uncovered, 30-35 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Top with blueberries; bake 10 minutes longer. Let stand 5-10 minutes before serving.
10. Top with sifted powdered sugar before serving (optional)
11. Serve with real maple syrup (optional, but seriously, I live in Vermont!)

SERVES: 6 (two slices per person)

NOTES: Last time I made it with a Ciabatta loaf, and I could only get ten 1-inch slices in the casserole dish, but it was delicious! You want a bread that can stand up to an overnight soaking.