

Best Meatloaf Ever

(Boldly titled by the creator of the recipe)

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<https://southerndiscourse.com/best-meatloaf-ever/>

Prep Time: 20 minutes - Cook Time: 50 minutes

Servings: 5 people

Recipe as it was originally written (see my notes about changes below):

Ingredients

- 2 pounds ground beef, 85/15 or 90/10 lean to fat ratio
- 2 large eggs
- 1 medium yellow onion, finely diced
- 1 medium green bell pepper, finely diced
- 1.5 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup canned milk (evaporated milk)
- cooking oil

Glaze Ingredients

- 15 ounce tomato sauce
- 1 cup BBQ sauce
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- splash of Worcestershire sauce

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375° Fahrenheit.
2. Mix together all ingredients for the meatloaf except the flour and milk. Mix just enough to evenly distribute the ingredients throughout the ground beef. Add in flour and milk, being careful not to overmix.
3. Form a loaf with the beef mixture. Add enough cooking oil to cover the bottom of a skillet or dutch oven 1/8-1/4 of an inch deep. Heat oil and add loaf. Sear on both sides and remove skillet from heat.
4. Whisk together ingredients for meatloaf glaze. Pour over top of meatloaf with any renderings or oil still in the bottom of the skillet.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 45 – 50 minutes or until meatloaf reaches 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Halfway through baking, spoon extra sauce from skillet over the loaf. When baking time is finished, remove from oven. Let rest for 10 minutes before moving to a platter or slicing to serve.

I like the idea of the recipe, but adjusted the recipe to be less sweet and more wine-friendly. As you'll see from my notes, the recipe should continue to evolve!

Notes on ingredients:

- I used mix of 3/4 beef and 1/4 pork.
- I used "fire-roasted" crushed tomatoes in the glaze but any tomato product would work.
- Also in the glaze, I substituted about a cup and a half of mushroom bisque for both the BBQ sauce and the broth – I used Fire & Kettle in a small carton from Whole Foods

Mushroom sauce:

I served the meatloaf with mashed potatoes and a simple mushroom sauce (not part of the original recipe) made of the following:

- 1 lb. of mushrooms – shiitake, crimini, other types, a mix – sliced and lightly chopped
- Olive oil
- Butter
- Salt
- Remaining mushroom bisque
- Shiitake broth (Plant Strong small carton at Whole Foods)

I sautéed the mushrooms in a mix of oil and butter until they released their liquid and some were beginning to brown. Then poured in remaining bisque and some stock and simmered until the sauce was somewhat thick but pourable consistency. Unfortunately, I have to admit that the sauce reminded me of the cream of mushroom soup from Thanksgiving. I would skip the bisque in the sauce next time in favor of some wine or sherry, and make a lighter sauce. And maybe add some more seasoning.

Comments on the recipe:

The cooked loaf is bland. I recommend adding more seasoning, to your taste... chile flakes, ginger, oregano, fresh garlic, mustard, ketchup... And possibly include some less finely diced peppers or other vegetable.

I like the method of forming a loaf with your hands and searing it in a skillet before finishing it in the oven. However, it was problematic! It was way too much mix to fit in my 11" cast iron skillet. I ended up pulling off about a quarter of the mix to cook another day. Next time I would make two loaves, or reduce the overall quantity. It was also a bit too wet to stay together.

The searing was comical, as the loaf kept falling apart. Turning it and keeping it together was a challenge. In the future, I might freeze the loaf for about 30-60 minutes, just long enough the stay together during the searing.

The recipe says to remove the skillet from the heat before pouring on the glaze. Be sure to do this (I didn't), otherwise fat splattering as you pour the glaze will result in some exciting flames. I speak from experience. I never mind a little flambé, though. It was a great night.

I thought the meatloaf was a bit dry. I may have overcooked it a bit. I would also think of poking the cooked loaf all over with a skewer and pouring on broth or demi-glace, like you do with a rum or lemon cake to get that moistness on the inside.