

BOB'S MOTHER'S MEATLOAF

As a kid, we all enjoyed my Mother's meatloaf dinner. One of the reasons was that the meatloaf was so good and we always hoped there would be leftovers for meatloaf sandwiches the next day, and of course meatloaf dinners reheated, which was a chore because it was a time way before microwave ovens. Guess I'm showing my age, oh well.

I'm going to give you the approximate amounts to make just one meatloaf, but if you can and want the leftovers, double up and make two. It takes the same amount of oven space and time and to me is well worth it. You can always freeze the meatloaf and re-do the vegetables later.

So here goes.

Ingredients

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 pound ground breakfast sausage
- 1 large egg
- 1 onion – medium to small diced
- ¼ to ½ cup bread crumbs or more (this and the egg help to hold the loaf together)
- A few potatoes peeled quartered or halved depending on size
- Some carrots peeled and cut to 3 to 4 inches
- 1 onion halved and large sliced if you wish to add for the vegetables
- Couple of cloves of garlic – finely diced
- Sage
- Thyme
- Cornstarch (or flour) to make the gravy
- Salt & Pepper

Preheat the oven to 400°.

Let the ground beef and sausage come to almost room temperature. It's difficult to mix when really cold right out of the frig. Place the meat, egg, diced onion, bread crumbs, garlic, thyme, sage and a good helping of salt and some pepper into a good size bowl. Wash your hands and get ready: Using your hands, mix the whole mess into a well mixed mass. Squeeze, pinch, smooch until it is all consistent. Now form into a loaf about the size of a bread loaf pan. In fact, if you have a bread loaf pan, you can put it all in the pan lined with plastic wrap and let the pan form the loaf. (You won't cook it in the loaf pan.)

Remove the 'loaf' of meat from the pan, or just place the one you have hand made into a roasting pan. I use one of those oblong enamel roasting pans. I do use one of my larger ones, because I usually make two complete loaves. If you are making two, be sure there is room between the loaves, you don't want them to touch and you need room for the vegetables later. Do not use the wire rack. Place the roaster in the oven and add a couple of cups of hot water to the pan, so that the water comes up about an

inch or so. Roast for about 20 minutes watching to check the water level and add some if it gets low.

While it's roasting peel and cut the potatoes, carrots and if you wish you could add another onion to the vegetables. Put the potatoes (and carrots if you wish) into water so they don't turn brown.

When the 20 minutes are up, add all the drained vegetables and add enough hot water to cover $\frac{3}{4}$ of the vegetables you added, but don't submerge the meat. Roast for another 40 to 50 minutes until the vegetables are tender and the meat is at least 165° in the thickest part.

When done, remove the vegetables from the pan and place in a bowl to keep warm. Remove the loaf (loaves) from the pan and cover with foil and a towel to keep warm. Put the roaster on the stovetop and bring the liquid to a boil. Add either cornstarch (or flour) to the liquid to thicken the gravy. I usually use cornstarch as there is already water in the juices and it works better (Flour is usually added to just the grease and then a liquid is then added to the browned flour to make the gravy). When you add cornstarch you begin by placing the cornstarch in a bowl and add cold water to it. Mix it well and then add it to the boiling liquid. Never add cornstarch directly to the gravy, it will lump. Stir constantly with the heat turned down a bit to make the gravy and add more cornstarch as needed to make the thickness you want. Be sure to taste the gravy to see if it needs some salt and pepper – it probably will need it.

Slice the meatloaf and serve with the hot vegetables and gravy.

Leftovers keep well in the refrigerator if you have any. The microwave will heat all another day.

If you have made two loaves and wish to keep one or part of one for a long time, wrap it up and put it in the freezer for another day.

Meatloaf sandwiches are Great. Thin slice the refrigerated loaf and add mayonnaise and lettuce using a nice bread of your choice. Some people like to add a slice or two of tomato. But unless they are fresh from your garden (not the store) I'd leave out the cardboard.

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