

What could be better gift than oven-ready pork loin?

A gift of food is a gift of so many things – it's an extension of yourself; an expression of love, care and friendship. And it's a precious gift of time from the kitchen that is priceless these hurried, crazy days.

I love giving and receiving food gifts for all seasons, so I am always on the lookout for special recipes that create unique holiday gifts. This year, my friends and family will be receiving holiday nourishment in the form of a specially prepared pork roast: butter-fried, pounded, stuffed, tied and magnificent – all ready to be roasted.

When giving a gift of food, I've learned how very important it is to include the recipient in a part of this food ritual. By allowing them the opportunity to cook their gift, it gives each one ownership in the final outcome and they are simply delighted, proud to be included in the cooking process. This holiday season won't be any different – I know each one will thoroughly enjoy roasting their own pork roast, my homemade gift of sustenance.

Chef Alli's Fruit-Stuffed Roast Pork
Recipe from *Cook's Illustrated*, Sept. 2007, by way of *Rob Russell, Ace of Hearts BBQ Specialties*, tweaked by Chef Alli

- 1 cup apple cider
- 1/2 cup cider vinegar
- 3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1 large shallot, peeled, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup dried apples, packed lightly



Chef Alli Winter

• Who's Cookin' Now?

- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped dried apricots
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup dried cherries
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 2 1/2 to 3 lb. boneless center-cut pork loin roast, double-butterflied by your butcher to approx. 1/2-inch thickness all across, when laid out flat
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Bring all ingredients except pork roast to a simmer in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat; cover saucepan and reduce heat to low, cooking ingredients until fruits are quite softened, approximately 20 minutes. Strain this mixture through a fine-mesh sieve, reserving the liquid to use as a basting glaze. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 450 degrees

F. Place prepared roast out onto a clean work surface and cover with plastic wrap. Using the smooth side of a mallet, pound out the thick parts of pork loin until pork loin feels even all across; season to taste with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Spread prepared filling out over seasoned roast, leaving a 1/2 inch border around the edges like a picture frame. Starting with one short side of the roast, roll it up very tightly. Secure rolled roast with kitchen twine at 1 inch intervals; season outside of roast with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Place roast onto a foil-lined baking sheet that has been coated with a bit of canola oil. Roast, uncovered, for 15-20 minutes or until roast is nicely browned. Reduce heat to 350 degrees F. and continue to cook until internal temperature of roast is 130-135 degrees. Remove roast from the oven and tent with foil, letting rest for 15-20 minutes to let roast continue to raise in temperature. While roast is resting, warm reserved basting glaze. Slice roast and slather with warm glaze to serve.

Alli Winter was raised in Topeka and began cooking at age 4, though it was much later when she attended the Personal Chef Institute in Rio Rancho, N.M., where she acquired her certification. Her website is at www.ChefAllis.com.

Social Security tells all about retirement

By James Feyerherm

Social Security District Manager
Social Security is as American as baseball and apple pie. Not everyone likes apples or baseball games, but almost every American who reaches retirement age will receive Social Security retirement benefits. In fact, 96 percent of Americans are covered by Social Security.

If you're ready to retire in the near future, this article is for you. We'd like to share with you a few important items about Social Security retirement benefits and how to apply for them.

When you work and pay Social Security taxes, you earn "credits"

toward Social Security benefits. If you were born in 1929 or later, you need 40 credits (10 years of work) to qualify for retirement benefits.

To qualify for retirement benefits, 10 years is the minimum. The amount of your benefit is determined by how long you work and how much you earn. Higher lifetime earnings result in higher benefits. If there were some years when you did not work or had low earnings, your benefit amount may be lower than if you had worked steadily or earned more.

Also, your age when you retire makes a difference in your benefit amount. The full retirement age

(the age at which full retirement benefits are payable) has been rising from age 65 to age 67. You can retire as early as age 62, but if benefits start before you reach your full retirement age, your monthly payment is reduced. Find out what your full retirement age is by referring to the chart in our publication, Retirement Benefits, at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10035.html. It's in the second section.

Just as you can choose an early retirement and get a reduced payment, you also can choose to keep working beyond retirement age to take advantage of a larger payment. Your benefit will increase automatically by a percentage

from the time you reach full retirement age until you start receiving benefits or reach age 70.

The decision of when to retire is an individual one and depends on a number of factors. To help you weigh the factors, read our online fact sheet, When To Start Receiving Retirement Benefits, available at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10147.html.

You may want to consider your options by using our Retirement Estimator to get estimates of future benefits. You can plug in different scenarios to help you make a more informed retirement decision. Try it out at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator.

Thomas County Jail

Booked into the Thomas County jail:

- Leodagrio Batalla-Landa, 38, West Valley, Utah, Dec. 2, distribution of Schedule V drug or analog, Kansas Highway Patrol, released Dec. 12 to Highway Patrol.
- Ascencion Mota, 61, West Valley, Utah, Dec. 2, distribution of Schedule V drug or analog, Highway Patrol, released Dec. 4 on recognizance.
- Gregory Thomas Mead, 42,

Colby, Dec. 6, Thomas County Sheriff's Office/Logan County Sheriff's Office, failure to appear, released Dec. 8 on \$17,973.67 appearance bond.

- Scott Canas Silva, 24, Colby, Dec. 6, assault on a law enforcement officer, disorderly conduct, obstruction of official duty, pedestrian under the influence, Colby Police Department, released Dec. 9 on appearance bond.
- Sharon Pearl Despain, 52, Monument, Dec. 7, domestic bat-

tery, Logan County Sheriff, released Dec. 8 on recognizance.

- Sheila Rae Gaede, 45, Dresden, Dec. 8, giving a worthless check, Thomas County Sheriff, released same day on recognizance.
- Barry Dion Woods, 50, Hobbs, N.M.
- Dec. 10, driving under the influence (second offense), transporting open container/alcohol, refusal to take PBT breath test, Highway Patrol, released same day with charges pending.

- Angela Linea Delano, 29, Goodland, Dec. 11, disorderly conduct, Colby Police, released same day on notice to appear.
- James Doyle Holmes, 30, Westminster, Colo., Dec. 11, driving with license suspended or revoked, Highway Patrol, released same day on notice to appear.
- Kelly Ann McNamee, 33, Colby, Dec. 11, disorderly conduct, Colby Police, released same day on notice to appear.

Student News

Colby Public Schools
Activities: Monday: Colby Community College Christmas break; 2:30 p.m. fifth grade band concert, grade school auditorium; 7 p.m. school board meeting, administration building; 7:30 p.m. fifth to eighth grade band concert, grade school auditorium. **Tuesday:** college Christmas break. **Wednesday:** 3:30 p.m. dismiss for Winter Break; end of second quarter and first semester. **Thursday: Friday:** no school, Christmas break; no practice.

Menus: Monday: fish shapes, au gratin potatoes, mixed vegetables, pears. **Tuesday:** soft-shell taco, lettuce and tomato, salsa, celery sticks, garlic bread, peaches. **Wednesday:** ham sandwich, curly fries, cauliflower with cheese, applesauce. **Thursday:** no school. **Friday:** no school.

Sacred Heart
Activities: Tuesday: 7 p.m. second through fifth grade music program. **Wednesday:** 3:30 p.m. dismiss for Winter Break; end of second quarter.

Menus: Monday: ravioli, green beans, pears, French bread. **Tuesday:** chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, peach halves. **Wednesday:** potato bar, broccoli with cheese or chili, pineapple bits. **Friday:** no school.

Heartland
Activities: Monday: sixth through 12th grade semester exams; noon – secondary dismissed; 7 p.m. board meeting. **Tuesday:** sixth through twelfth grade semester exams; noon – secondary dismissed. **Wednesday:** end of

second quarter and first semester; noon – all students dismissed. **Thursday:** no school, Christmas break. **Friday:** no school, Christmas break.

Golden Plains
Activities: no school, Christmas break.

Brewster
Activities: Monday: 7 p.m. Board of Education. **Wednesday:** end of semester; half day for staff and teachers. **Thursday:** no school, Christmas break. **Friday:** no school, Christmas break.

Menus: Monday: breakfast: pancakes and sausage; lunch: hamburger gravy, mashed potatoes, broccoli, peas, biscuit, fruit. **Tuesday:** breakfast: sausage cheese biscuit; lunch: cheese quesadilla pizza, seven-layer salad, corn, peaches. **Wednesday:** breakfast: scrambled eggs; lunch: tomato soup, grilled cheese sandwich, vegetable sticks, fruit.

Colby Community College
Christmas break.

Triplains
Activities: Monday: school in session. **Tuesday:** 6 to 9 p.m. home school basketball practice; 10 a.m. blood drive; school in session. **Wednesday:** end of second quarter; school in session. **Thursday:** no school, Christmas break. **Friday:** no school, Christmas break.

Send us your calendar and menus. E-mail colby.society@nwkansas.com or mail Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

Senior Progress Center

There will be a brunch Thursday at the Senior Progress Center. The center will close at noon Thursday and be closed until the next Tuesday.

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 10:30 a.m. dart game. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. Wii game. **Wednesday:** cookie day. **Thursday:** 11 a.m. brunch, center closes at noon. **Friday:** closed, no meals or transportation.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** steak fingers, mashed potatoes and gravy, mixed vegetables, apricots. **Tuesday:** Swedish meatballs, au gratin potatoes, broccoli, peaches. **Wednesday:** tuna salad, vegetable soup, tropical fruit salad, bread and crackers, cookie. **Thursday:** sausage gravy, cook's choice vegetable, strawberries and bananas, biscuits, fruit crisp. **Friday:** closed.

The Thomas County Nutrition Center invites anyone 60 and older and guests to lunch Monday through Friday at the senior center. Home delivery is available, as is pick-up service. A contribution of \$3 per meal is suggested for seniors, \$5.25 for others. For anyone under 60, home delivery is \$5.75. Make reservations at (784) 460-2901 by noon the day before.

Red Barn

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 2 p.m. Barnswallows. **Wednesday:** 10 a.m. ladies' Bible study; Hanukkah. **Thursday:** 2 p.m. Come On Down; winter begins. **Friday:** 9:30 a.m. Koffee Klatch; 2:30 p.m. Stitch & Chatter.

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