

ROASTED VENISON

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 10 HR (INCLUDES MARINATING)

A gentle seasoning and overnight marination lets venison's lean, clean mouth-filling meatiness shine.

- 3 lb Denver roast of venison, cut into 6- by 3-inch pieces**
- 2 heads garlic, cloves separated and smashed**
- ½ cup savory or thyme leaves, lightly crushed**
- ½ cup dry red wine**
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice**
- ½ teaspoon black peppercorns, slightly cracked**
- ¼ cup plus 1½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt**

»Toss venison with garlic, savory, wine, allspice, peppercorns, and ¼ cup oil in a sealable bag. Marinate, chilled, turning bag occasionally, at least 8 hours.

»Bring venison to room temperature, about 1 hour.

»Preheat oven to 450°F with rack in middle.

»Discard marinade and pat meat dry. Sprinkle on all sides with 1 tablespoon kosher salt, then ½ teaspoon ground pepper. Heat remaining 1½ tablespoons oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers, then brown meat on all sides in 2 or 3 batches, 3 to 4 minutes per batch. Transfer to a shallow baking pan. »Roast until venison registers 125°F on an instant-read thermometer (inserted 2 inches horizontally into meat) for rare, 5 to 8 minutes (depending on thickness of meat). Let stand on a cutting board 10 minutes before slicing across the grain.

COOKS' NOTES: Venison can be marinated up to 24 hours.

• You can substitute a 3-pound trimmed and tied center-cut beef tenderloin roast for the venison (do not cut into pieces). Follow recipe above, roasting until beef registers 120°F, 25 to 30 minutes for medium-rare.

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