

Grilled venison steaks

Wild deer numbers are increasing throughout England, and in parts of Southern and Central England populations have risen to the point where they're causing damage to woodlands and crops, particularly to the regeneration of coppice and young trees. Buying venison helps to keep deer populations at sustainable levels and many game dealers, butchers and farmers' markets now stock venison from wild deer, including venison burgers and sausages which are also great on the barbecue. Venison is a very lean meat with great flavour, and is low in cholesterol.

Ingredients:

2 Venison steaks (1.5-2cm thick cuts are best for barbecuing.)

For the marinade: (plan to marinate for at least 1-4 hours)

3 tablespoons white vinegar

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

1 tablespoon tomato ketchup

1 tablespoon honey

2 cloves of garlic, chopped

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram or basil

Method:

Combine the marinade ingredients with the venison steaks in a bowl or a resealable plastic bag and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. For best results refrigerate overnight.

When ready to cook place the steaks on a medium hot barbecue for 1 minute on each side to seal the meat. Cook for a further 2-4 minutes on each side, remembering that cooking times may vary depending on the thickness of the cut. Venison steaks are best cooked medium with a little pinkness - if overcooked they can become dry. Any spare marinade can be used to baste the steaks during cooking.

Remove the steaks from the grill and rest them for two minutes. Serve with a dressed salad for a delicious lunch.

For a more indulgent recipe, add a handful of crushed juniper berries and a slug of sloe gin to the marinade!