

Chef from the Hood Recipes



Chef:
Nick Nicaastro

Restaurant:
Healdsburg Bar & Grill

Recipe:
Grandma Josephina's Meatloaf with Hickory Bacon!

Ingredients:

1/4 cup olive oil
2 shallots chopped
1 large onion chopped
8-10 cloves garlic minced
1 tablespoon dried oregano
2 handfuls chopped Italian parsley
salt & pepper
2 pounds ground beef/chuck
1 1/2 cups Italian breadcrumbs
3 fresh eggs
1 cup homemade tomato sauce
1/2 pound sliced hickory bacon
garnish: more tomato/marinara sauce
with optional peas

Nick Nicaastro's extended Sicilian-American family lived on the same New York block and gathered every Sunday for big family-style dinners. His grandmother's meatloaf was served covered in a homemade marinara sauce that included the typically Sicilian addition of peas. Now her meatloaf is one of the most popular dishes at the Healdsburg Bar & Grill, where a fat slice is served with housemade tomato sauce (yes, with peas), a vegetable and a side of mashed potatoes. Nick remembers, "Those Sunday dinners took hours and hours of preparation. I loved the aroma of simmering tomato sauce and garlic. Family and great food... the meals were 6 hour events!"

Pour enough olive oil in a large saute pan to generously coat the bottom. Heat oil and add the onion and shallots. When onions are transparent and get a bit golden, lower the heat and add garlic, stirring for a few minutes. Add salt, pepper, oregano and parsley, stir a few times and remove from heat. Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, place the ground meat, breadcrumbs, eggs, and sauce. Add the sauteed onion/garlic mixture. Use your hands to mix all of the ingredients together. This takes a bit of work - your hands are the best tools for the job. Shape into a big loaf and bake in an oiled loaf pan or on a sheet pan for an hour, or until center is done. Best served in slices with a ladle full of sauce. Sauce suggestion: Add 1 cup of frozen peas to 4 cups of sauce. Let peas simmer in sauce for about 7 minutes, then serve.