

I plan to make this for our community's next Senior's Dinner. It's just as fun to serve them a Blue Plate Special, as it is a fancier meal. This loaf's added treat of a slightly sweet & sour applesauce topping, keeps it light. It doesn't need gravy, just a few brightly coloured vegetables to even out the plate.

Growing up we used to be served meat, a starch and one vegetable at six o'clock sharp. It wasn't until I was in my early teens, that I questioned this. I presented a new idea to my mom, suggesting that meat is really just another side dish. So perhaps we could serve two or three vegetables along with the meat and starch? This helped us move along into a more current way of eating, being mindful of our nutrition while still presenting the family with a feel good dinner.

Applesauce Topped Meatloaf

Ingredients

1# extra lean ground beef
1½ c fresh breadcrumbs
1 egg
½ c applesauce
¼ c finely chopped onion or shallot
1 heaping teaspoon Dijon mustard – smooth or grainy
½ t dried thyme
½ t salt
¼ t fresh ground pepper

Topping:

½ c applesauce
1 T brown sugar
½ T apple cider vinegar
1 t Dijon mustard – smooth or grainy
a sprinkle of thyme

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°
Whisk together the egg and applesauce.
Stir in the onion, Dijon, breadcrumbs and salt & pepper.
Thoroughly stir this mixture into the ground beef.
Put the beef mixture into a loaf pan.
In a small bowl, whisk together all of the topping ingredients.
Form a trough down the center of the meatloaf, deep enough to hold all of the topping mixture. Be sure to leave a dam at each end.
Spoon the topping mixture into the indentation.
Place the meatloaf in the center of the oven and bake for 1 hour.
Remove from the oven and let sit at room temperature for 10 minutes before serving.

Note: our own beef is trimmed super lean, so there's very little fat along the edges of the meatloaf. A good trick is to slightly dome the meat loaf, so if there is any extra fat, it can be blotted off, or gently poured off.

Also, I like to put something else in the oven to cook with the meatloaf. It's on anyhow, might as well use it!

To serve with roasted butternut squash: peel, core and dice the squash into approximately 1" cubes. Toss with a little oil, salt & pepper. Place in a parchment lined baking dish and cook in the oven with the meatloaf for the last 40 minutes of the meatloaf's baking time.

Farmhouse Cook 2012