



Now-fashioned spinach stuffed turkey meatloaf boasts a flavorful vegetable-cheese filling and the goodness of wholegrain oats. Oats keep the meatloaf moist and juicy and contribute important dietary fiber.

Old standby

Spinach stuffed meatloaf uses ground turkey instead of beef

Ah, comfort foods! The bread pudding, chicken soup and other comfy, cozy foods of childhood are back but with a difference. While they're just as comforting, they can be used as part of a lighter, healthier diet.

Modifying old-time favorite foods to make them part of a healthy eating plan is easier than you might think. Almost any recipe can be changed to reduce fat, cholesterol, sugar and sodium or to add fiber.

Depending upon the recipe, an ingredient might be eliminated, reduced or replaced by a more wholesome ingredient. For example, adding oil and salt to the water to cook pasta is unnecessary if you stir the pasta occasionally to prevent sticking and season the sauce with extra herbs and spices.

Sugar often can be cut by one-third to one-half in dessert recipes. The oil or margarine used for sautéing vegetables in skillet dishes also can be reduced, especially if you use a non-stick pan.

Many ingredients have healthful substitutes. Plain low-fat yogurt can replace sour cream in dressings, dips and some baked products. Doing so will reduce fat and cholesterol as well as trim calories. Try substituting skim or low-fat milk for whole milk in sauces, puddings and beverages; low-moisture, part-skim mozzarella cheese can replace cheddar

and other high-fat cheeses in casseroles and pasta dishes. Thicken soups and stews with ground oat flour rather than all-purpose flour. Ground oat flour can be made in the blender or food processor and stored tightly covered in the refrigerator for added convenience.

In recipes that call for ground beef, substitute ground turkey for all or part of the beef. Considerably lower in both fat and cholesterol, ground turkey is available in many supermarkets both fresh and frozen, usually in one-pound rolls. Because it is uncooked, it can be used just like ground beef in pizza toppings, spaghetti sauce, burgers, meatballs, even a new-fashioned meatloaf.

Spinach Stuffed Turkey Meatloaf has more than a reduced fat content going for it. Oats added to the meat mixture for easier shaping contribute the dietary fiber which was common in Grandpa's diet but often is lacking in today's diets.

Fiber has a number of health benefits. And, now the results of two studies conducted by Northwestern University Medical School indicate that oats, a source of water-soluble fiber, can actually help reduce blood cholesterol levels when eaten as part of a fat-modified diet. And lowering blood cholesterol levels potentially reduces the risk of heart attack.

SPINACH STUFFED TURKEY MEATLOAF

- 1 10-oz. pkg. frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained
- 1 cup coarsely chopped mushrooms
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 1 tsp. margarine
- ½ cup (2 oz.) shredded Swiss cheese
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 lb. ground turkey
- ¼ lb. ground beef
- ¾ cup oats (quick or old fashioned, uncooked)
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 whole egg or egg white, beaten
- 1 tsp. Italian seasoning
- ½ tsp. salt (optional)
- ¼ tsp. pepper

Heat oven to 375°F. Sauté spinach, mushrooms and onion in margarine over medium heat 3-4 minutes. Stir in ¼ cup Swiss cheese and Parmesan cheese. Combine remaining ingredients reserving remaining ¼ cup Swiss cheese mix well. Spoon ¾ of meat mixture lengthwise down center of 11x7-inch glass baking dish. Make a deep indentation down center of meat; fill with spinach mixture. Top with remaining meat mixture to encase spinach filling. Bake 50-55 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining Swiss cheese; return to oven 1-2 minutes or until cheese is melted. Let stand 5 minutes before slicing. Makes 8 servings.

Petal tarts are delicious Valentine's Day dessert

(AP) — Honor your sweetheart with a lovely Valentine dessert trimmed with chocolate hearts.

PETAL TARTS

- 1 pkg. piecrust mix (for 2-crust pie)
 - 3 tbsp. sugar
 - ¼ cup chocolate-flavored syrup
 - 20-oz. can calorie-reduced cherry pie filling
 - 2 tsp. burgundy
 - ½ cup dairy sour cream
- Chocolate Hearts

Combine crust mix and 2 tbsp. of the sugar; add syrup and mix well. On floured surface roll dough to ¼-

inch thickness. Cut into 48 2-inch circles, re-rolling trimmings as necessary. Place a dough circle in the bottom of 8 ungreased 6-oz. custard cups. Overlap 5 circles around sides of cups; press to seal. Bake in a 350°F oven for 20 minutes. Cool slightly. Remove from cups. Cool thoroughly. Combine pie filling and burgundy; spoon into cups. Chill. To serve, combine sour cream and remaining sugar; spoon over filling. Top each with a chocolate heart. Makes 8 servings.

Chocolate Hearts: Melt ½ cup semisweet chocolate pieces with 1 tsp. margarine or butter; spread ¼-inch thick on waxed-paper-lined bak-

ing sheet. Chill 10 minutes. Press small heart cutter into chocolate. Chill until firm. Lift out cutouts. Cover, chill. Remelt trimmings, drizzle over hearts. Rechill until needed. Nutrition information per serving: 376 calories, 5 g protein, 49 g carbohydrates, 20 g fat, 7 mg cholesterol, 315 mg sodium.

O&E asks readers to send in recipes

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers would like to print your favorite recipes and new recipes.

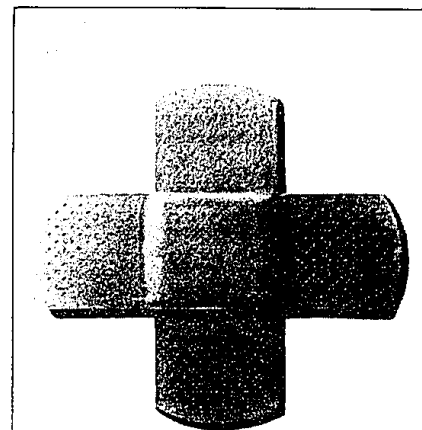
A special page featuring these popular winter food items will be seen Monday, Feb. 23. Please submit typewritten recipes, including name, address and a telephone number where you may be reached during working hours, by Wednesday, Feb. 18, to Food Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36331 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich 48150.

Plans for a column containing readers' recipes also are underway. Recipes for this feature, with the information requested above, may be sent at any time to the food editor.

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