Sunday, January 18, 1998

Making a better meatical aron Tyler Herbst author of "The Food Lo Tiptionary." (Hearst Books, 1994) For moister, more tender mestical, use coarsely ground meat instead of finely ground.

If you don't like getting your hands measy when mixing a meatloof mix-ture, put the ingredients in a lorge, up-closure bag, seal, then squish the contents together until well mixed.

For a julcy, more flavorful meation, add 1/3 cup of liquid (tomato or veg-stable julce, wine, best broth, etc.) per pound of meat.

Substituting red wine or dark beer for any liquid called for in the recipe will enrich a meatloat's flavor.

Add fiber and nutrition by substituting 1/3 cup oat bran for 1/3 cup bread crumbs. If your meaticaf recipe doesn't include bread crumbs, add 1/4 cup oat bran plus 2 tablespoons liquid such as milk, water, beef broth,

For a moist, delicious mesticaf that hops cut back on most intake, substitute a cup of finely grated potato carrot (or half of each) for a quarter pound of the mest. Or add 1/2 cup mashed potatoes to the mix.

Make individual servings by baking meation in large, gressed moffin tins. Small meationres bake faster so watch the timing.

If you're planning to freeze a whole meation, line the pan with foll, allowing enough overlapt to cover and seal the finished loaf. Bake as usual, drain off grease and cool to room temperature before sealing the foil. Double wrap in plastic wrap and freeze for up to 6 months.





Carrots are worth their weight in gold

arrots are much more than just sticks on a relish tray. Carrots are very versatile. They can be steamed, stir-fired, juiced, purced haked or eaten raw. Teaty dessorts or quick breads can be made from carrots, they add color and crunch to sail ads, can be served as a vegetable side dish, or added to a piping hot soup. One carrot can contain a full day's recommended supply of beta carotene, and certainly tastes better than a pill. The beta carotene in carrotta is converted by the body to vitamin A. Beta carotene is important for good vision, helps keep the body's cells healthy, and may protect against certain cancers, heart disease, strokes and cataracts. Vitamin A has often been referred to as the anti-infective vitamin. It does not attack the infective organism, but may keep your resistance pumped up to fight off infection.

Carrots contain lots of soluble fiber, which can help lower blood choles-

registance pumped up to fight off infection.

Carrots contain lots of soluble fiber, which can help lower blood cholesterol, are low in calories, approximately 40 for a medium to large carrot and a good source of potassium.

Since vitamin A is stable in heat, carrots retain their nutrients when cooked. It is interesting to note that before the fielt century, wild carrots were used by Greeks and Romans for "medicinal" purposes.

Most children like carrots because the sugar content is high. This sugar flavor becomes more pronounced when carrots are cooked. Only beet have more natural sugar than carrots. The sugar lies in the outer layers so don't cut carrots deeply when peeling.

Storage tips

Storage tips

Carrots are available year-round, and Michigan and California are major producers. Do not store carrots

with apples, pears or other fruits that pro-duce ethylene gas ns they ripen.

This natural
gas makes carrots limp and
unattractive.

Look for firm,
smooth, evenly
t have a very

Look for firm, smooth, evenly shaped carrots that have a very orange color. The deeper the orange color of the carrot, the more vitamin A it contains. Avoid any that are flatby, shriveled, rough or cracked. If you buy fresh carrots that still have the greens attached, remove them right after purchasing. The greens can drain moisture away from carrots and make them limp and rubbery.

Carrots keep well in the refrigerator for a few weeks. When you are ready to use carrots, scrub them clean with a vegetable brush to remove any soil bacteria. Wesh carrots that say "pre-washed" on the package just to make sure they are bacteria-free.

Flavor enhancers

Curry powder, cumin, dill, caraway seeds, dried coriander and mustard seeds enhance the flavor of carrots.

seeds, dried coriander and mustard seeds enhance the flavor of carrots. Lemon juice can be squeezed on cooked carrots, or add a little honey and orange juice to make a glaze.

Mix grated carrots with peanut butter or cream cheese for a sandwich, or spread on crackers. To stretch meatloaf add shredded carrots. Your meatloaf will be juicier and more flavorful. Health experts recommend eating five fruits and vegetables a day. A serving of carrots is 1/2 cup, not much when you think shout it. Serving raw carrots for snacks is a good way to halp you gat your - Five A Day. If you have difficulty chewing carrots, blanch them until slightly softened. After blanching the carrots will be asay to chew.

Please see HOME SENSE, BE

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

Banish winter blaha Winter Freeze Chili Cookoff winners



on the web: http://observer.eccentric.com

Weeknight quick: Easy Italian Mini Meatloaf Supper pairs mini meatloaves topped with seasoned tomatoes, shredded cheese and an easy-to-make pasta.



BY KEZLY WYGONIE STAFF WRITER

BY KELT WICONE

TATF WAITE.

As winter blankets us with quiet and cold, simple, comforting foods are the ones we crave. And since there are always leftwers, mentions a good choice for this blustery seeson of unexpected storms.

Melanie Barnard knowa "Everyone Loves Mentlonf," and her newly published cookbook contains "more than 100 recipes for Loaves and Fixin's," (HarperPerennia), \$14.95, hardcover).

"It's the easiest thing to make, and not a lot can go wrong," said Barnard from her home in Connecticut, "It's the essence of home, and kids like it."

In her cookbook, Barnard intro-

necticut. "It's the essence of home, and kids like it."

In her cookbook, Barnard introduces readers to a variety of "loaves" with recipes for poultry, seafood and vegetarian loaves. There are also recipes for loaves made with sausage, lamb, venison and smoked ham, and suggestions for flavorful sauces.

Once relegated to diners and school cafeterias, meatloaf has become very hip. Besides the meatloaf you grow up with, Barnard shows how seasonings can make a world of difference with such preparations as Swedish Meatloaf, Argontinean Steakloaf, Thai Beef and Brown Rice Loaf and Jumaican Jer Chicken Loaf.

No matter what it's made of meatloaf is one of these stick-to-your-ribs foods whose memory stays

with you. Like oatmeal, most meatloaf recipes have a story.

"My grandparents were summertime nomads," said Barnard. "But you can't throw
time nomads," said Barnard.
"Because I was the oldest, I got to
travel with them in the summer.
Once we drove from Pennsylvania
where I lived to Colorado. This was
hefore Heliday Inns, and we
stopped at truck stops to eat.
Grandma could spot
a good one by counting the number of
trucks parked there.
A ten-truck stop was
winner.
"I quickly learned

A ten-truck stop was winner.

"I quickly learned the thing to order was meatloaf, mostly because it came with gravy and mashed potatoes, which were high on my favorite food list."

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Moatlouf is often our first introduction to home cooking. Barnard learned how to make meatlouf from her maternal gradienther. I learned how to make meatlouf in seventh grade home economics class and was surpised it tased so good. My mome a fine cook, but meatlouf isn't one of her specialties. Her meatlouf was dry, even smoothered with ketchup, and definitely not something I looked forward to. Meatlouf was the first recipe I shared with her.

"A lot of people treat meatlouf

sensonings. Main protein

Main protein
For the juiciest basic moatloaf, Barnard recommends using only fresh, not proviously frozen meat. For basic meatloaf she favors a blend of 3/4 pound chuck and about 6 ounces anch of lean ground pork and veal. If you're making a poultry loaf, she suggests using a blend of skinless white and Starch

Starch

Abraticas

"Starch is what gives the charac-teristic juicy and slightly soft tex-ture to a loaf, acting as a sponge to absorb and retain the flavorful juices," said Barnard. You can use

Rubbing the top of the meation mix-ture with cold water will minimize

fresh or dried bread crumbs, crack-er crumbs, satmeal, rice or pasta. Use bread crumbs in combination with other starches for an interest-ing texture. Fire choice for most meatleaves is fresh bread crumbs. "I like the bread to be firm and slightly dry, she said. For a loaf with 1-1/2 pounds of main protein, approxi-mately 1 cup of fresh crumbs is Binder.

Binder

EINMET
Eggs are the glue that holds
meatleaf together. For most leaves
Barnard said 2 eggs will do, but it
can be reduced to 1 if you're using
milk or yogurt. To reduce cholesterol 2 egg whites or 11% cup of cholesterol-irea egg aubstitute can be
used in place of each ogg in a
recipe.

Seasonings

Seasonings
"I like to use fresh herbs," said
Barnard, "but good-quality dried
herbs are better than limp, overthe-hill fresh herbs." She reminds
readers that spices don't have an
indefinite shelf life, will lose poteney over time and should be replaced
after a year.
For baking, Barnard prefers a
metal pan over glass because it
"seems to promote more browning,"
and hence more crust. Let meatloaf
rest 6 to 10 minutes before removing from pan for easier slicing.

See recipes inside.

See recipes inside.

Value wines come from Italy's northeast

Wine Picks

■ Picks of the Pick: 1995 S. Anderson Meriot, Stage Leap District \$28: 1994 Beringer Knights Valley Alluvium Red Table Wine \$25; and 1994 Chateau St. Jean Cinq Cepages

m Best buy syrahs: 1995 Richemont \$8; and 1995 McDowell \$16.

1995 McDowell 516.

© Critics of California chardonnay say they taste alike. Don't believe them and try: 1996 Chateau Souverain Barriel-fermented \$13; 1996 Beringer \$15; 1996 Pino Ridge Knottside \$18; 1996 B. Anderson, Comeros

\$23.

**Cleasy meriota: 1995 Clos du Bols \$17: 1995 Fetzer Bartel Select \$14: 1994 Lockwood Reserve \$24: 1994 Hogus Geneals Meriot \$21: 1995 Ballentine \$19: 1995 Pine Ridge Crimson Creek \$35: 1995 Schefer \$30.

\$30.

Mediom sengioresez: 1990 Castello di Gabbiano Chianti Classico Riserva (Italy) \$23; 1995 Atlas Pask Sangioresa \$30: 1995 inon Horse Sangioresa \$20; 1994 Marchese Antinoni Chianti Classico Riserva \$33.

BY ELEANOR & RAY HEALD SPECIAL WRITERS

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Some wine regions get all the hype. If you've heard of California wine, then you know there's a Napa Valley. It's much the same in Italy. Much attention is given to the Piedment and Tuscany. It's not that it's undeserved, but there's much more.

Since 1772, the Boscaini family has made wine in Italy's Verona region with one simple concept in mind: good wine come from good vineyards. Faithful to this principle, and aided today by modern grapegrowing and winemaking technology, Boscaini wines represent quality and value from Italy's northeast.

Fifth generation Daric Boscaini is current family representative. He has a degree in agricultural science with a specialization in grapegrowing. For more than 20 years, he directed the School of Vilteulture in Valpolicella. With his technical assistants, he identified microzones in the Venete and

Trentino Alto Adige regions with uni-

Trentino Alto Adigo regions with uniform climatic and soil conditions where wine has identifiable characteristics and unique personality.

From the original vineyard and winery in the hills of Torbe in Valpollecila, over the past two decades, the Boscain family has acquired vineyards in the five best microzones. All wines are made from indigenous grapes, unfamiliar to most, but are either single vineyard or microzone. Grape names are not the important clement here, so we're skipping them in favor of emphasizing the producer's name, Boscaini, and the microzone, both of utmost importance.

and the microzone, both of utmost importance.
From the Alto Adige comes 1996
Boscaini Castel Firmiano Pinot Grigio
S16. Pinot grigio is the "hottest" white grape variety from Italy today. It pairs handsomely with seafood or can stand on its own as an aperitif. The Boscaini version, originates from vineyard soils rich in white marble stones from the

Please see WINES, B2



Italian winery: The cellars at Boscaini in Italy's Verona region. The Boscaini family has made wine in this region: since 1772.