



FLAVORFUL & TENDER. A serving of Prosciutto and Red Pepper Stuffed Petite Filet is seen in New York. The filet is a great option for a holiday meal. (Sara Moulton via AP)

KitchenWise: Serve petite beef filet for a holiday dinner

By Sara Moulton
The Associated Press

Want to serve a fancy roast for Christmas dinner without breaking the bank? Try a petite beef filet. Cut from the shoulder, long and thin, and weighing between 8 and 10 ounces, the petite filet looks like a mini tenderloin of beef — one of the priciest and most popular of roasts. But it's much less expensive and more flavorful than the tenderloin. And tender, too.

Here we've rolled it up and stuffed it with prosciutto, as well as with pesto and roasted red peppers. The latter two ingredients — one green, the other red — echo the signature colors of the holiday even as they delight the taste buds. And, bonus! You can buy them by the jar in the supermarket, which makes the prep that much easier.

The only tricky part of this recipe for Prosciutto and Red Pepper Stuffed Petite Filet is double-butterflying the roast — that is, cutting the filet in such a way that it becomes a big flat rectangle. Start by looking for the largest petite filets you can

find. They're the easiest to slice and they hold more stuffing. Then, before commencing your butterfly surgery, read the instructions several times. The goal is to avoid cutting a hole in the meat as you butterfly it, although it's not a problem even if you do. The roast will still hold together after the meat is pounded, lined with prosciutto, rolled, and tied. And tying it isn't that difficult. If you need help, there are several terrific videos online that will take you through it step by step.

This recipe doesn't need to be made at the last minute. You can cut, roll, and tie the roast ahead of time and chill it for several hours. Then, when you're 25 minutes or so from sitting down to dinner, brown it, pop it in the oven, and let it rest for the requisite 10 minutes. Whip up the sauce while the roast is resting. You will look like a culinary genius as you plate up a singularly elegant and festive holiday meal.

Editor's note: Sara Moulton is host of public television's "Sara's Weeknight Meals." She was executive chef at Gourmet magazine for nearly 25 years and spent a decade hosting several Food Network shows, including "Cooking Live." Her latest cookbook is Home Cooking 101.

Prosciutto and Red Pepper Stuffed Petite Filet

Servings: 4

Start to finish: 45 minutes (25 active)

Two large petite beef filets (about 1 1/4 pounds total)
1/4 pound thin-sliced prosciutto
1/4 cup pesto
1/4 cup thin red pepper strips
2 tablespoons olive oil
Kosher salt
Black pepper
1/3 cup dry red or white wine
1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth

Preheat the oven to 400° Fahrenheit.

Butterfly the petite filet roasts: Working with one filet at a time, place the filet on a cutting board with one of the short ends facing you. Start cutting the roast along the left long side about 2/3 of the way down from the top of the filet, cutting through almost to the other side but stopping about 1/2 inch from the other side. Flip the roast over so that the cut side is now on the right. Repeat the procedure on the left side again, slicing about 2/3 of the way down from the top of the filet, cutting to within 1/2-inch of the other side. Open up the two flaps you just cut in the filet so it is the shape of a rectangle. Pound the meat between two sheets of plastic wrap, sprinkled with water until it is about 1/4-inch thick all over.

Arrange half the prosciutto over the inside of each roast, leaving a 1/2-inch border on all sides. Spread half of the pesto on top of the prosciutto and arrange the red pepper strips down the middle. Starting with the long end, roll up the beef to form a cylinder and tie it with twine at one-inch lengths.

In a medium ovenproof skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat, add the meat, seasoned all over with salt and pepper, and brown it on all sides, about five minutes. Transfer the pan to the middle shelf of the oven and roast the filets for 10 minutes for medium-rare meat. Transfer the roasts to a plate, cover them loosely with foil, and let them rest for 10 minutes before slicing.

Meanwhile, add the wine to the skillet and deglaze the pan over medium-high heat, scraping up the brown bits from the bottom. Add the chicken broth and any juices from the resting meat and simmer for three minutes.

To serve: Remove the strings, slice the meat, and arrange it on four plates. Spoon some of the pan juices over each portion.

Nutrition information per serving: 402 calories (201 calories from fat); 22 g fat (5 g saturated, 0 g trans fats); 122 mg cholesterol; 976 mg sodium; 4 g carbohydrates; 0 g fiber; 1 g sugar; 42 g protein.



What to do if one starts in yours: Never put water on a grease or oil fire. Keep a lid handy when cooking. If a fire starts in a pan, turn off the burner and carefully slide the lid over the pan to extinguish the fire. Don't run outside with the burning pot. Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen. If the fire continues, leave the home and call 9-1-1.



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