

Deer Hunting Dates

09/16/23 - 12/31/23	Deer - Archery	Statewide
10/19/23 - 10/22/23	Deer - Early Antlerless	
10/19/23 - 10/22/23	Deer - Youth	Statewide
11/4/23 - 11/19/23	Deer - Firearm (Season A)	100 Series permit areas
11/4/23 - 11/12/23	Deer - Firearm (Season A)	200 & 300 Series permit area
11/18/23 - 11/26/23	Deer - Firearm (Season B)	300 Series permit areas
11/25/23 - 12/10/23	Deer - Muzzleloader	Statewide

What Is Venison?

Everything you need to know about the red meat alternative and how to prepare it



Lisovskaya/Getty Images

By Layla Khoury-Hanold for Food Network Kitchen
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If hunting game is part of your culture, then you're probably familiar with venison. Or maybe you've noticed venison jerky joining the ranks of beef jerky on grocery store shelves. But what is venison? Here, we answer all your venison questions, from what it tastes like to how to prepare it.

What Kind of Meat Is Venison?

Although venison is most commonly meat from deer, the term technically refers to the meat from any game animal including elk, cari-

bou or antelope. In fact, the word "venison" is derived from the Latin word venari, which means to hunt or pursue. Venison can be portioned into similar cuts as beef, including steaks, roasts, ground meat and stew meat.

Is Venison Healthier than Beef?

Venison contains 50% less fat than beef, and while it's slightly higher in cholesterol, it's lower in saturated fats, making it a healthy red meat alternative. It is also slightly higher in protein and contains higher levels of Vitamins B6 and B12, Omega 3 fatty acids, riboflavin and niacin. It contains high levels of iron and is an abundant source of seleni-

um, a powerful mineral and antioxidant.

Does Venison Taste Like Beef?

Venison may come in similar cuts as beef, but the flavor isn't comparable. Venison has a distinct earthy, almost rich flavor, owing to a deer's diet of grasses, leaves, twigs, berries and fruit. Venison may have other flavor characteristics influenced by diet, including herbaceous notes from herbs or nuttiness from acorns. It has a firm, smooth texture, but since it's much leaner than beef, it tends to not be as juicy.

Pan-fried fillet of venison in wrought-iron black skillet with watercress salad garnish.

Make a plan for a safe and successful deer hunting season

As archery deer hunters enjoy the current hunting season and 400,000 hunters prepare for firearms deer hunting seasons, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources reminds hunters to plan ahead for a safe and enjoyable hunt.

"Enjoying the hunt is a lot easier after doing some simple planning. To that end, we've added a wealth of information for hunters on our website to assist in preparing for deer hunting," said Barb Keller, Minnesota DNR big game program leader. "Using these planning tools is easy and can open up some breathing room for hunters once the season arrives so they can focus on having a safe and successful hunt."

The Minnesota DNR's online make a plan tool (mndnr.gov/deerhunt) provides a comprehensive step-by-step list of information hunters need to consider before heading to deer camp. Hunters can walk through the steps to consider, including knowing the hunting regulations, planning for deer processing, getting their deer sampled for CWD, being safe and making the most out of their hunt. To use the online tool, all hunters need to know is the deer permit area number or DPA numbers where they intend to hunt, which they can find on an interactive deer map.

In Minnesota, archery deer season began Sept. 16 and continues through Sunday, Dec. 31. Youth and early antlerless seasons are Thursday, Oct. 19, through Sunday, Oct. 22, and firearms deer season is Saturday, Nov. 4, with various closing dates depending on a hunter's DPA. Muzzleloader is Saturday, Nov. 25, through Sunday, Dec. 10.

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How to Cook Venison Steak

Using a pan-sear to oven method (much like you'd sear a beef steak) is a straightforward and delicious way to prepare venison, which often comes from the deer's hindquarters.

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Generously season venison steaks with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper on both sides.
3. Heat a couple tablespoons olive oil in a large

sauté pan over medium-high heat. Using tongs, place venison in the pan and sear steaks until golden brown, about 4 to 5 minutes.

4. Turn the steaks over, place pan in oven, and roast until a thermometer inserted reads 135 degrees F for medium rare, 4 to 5 minutes for 8-ounce venison steaks.



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