

Buffalo Horn Ranch Natural Meats
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The Perfect Bison Roast

The roasting of meat is an age old art that is becoming intimidating for many modern cooks. We are in an age of 'fast foods' where, as one friend told me, "if I can't cook it in 20 minutes, we don't eat it". What a shame this is, as this limits us to cuts of meat such as steaks, burgers and other fast cooking foods. Slower cooking of foods, especially meats, brings out a whole new level of flavors that are not released in fast cooking. Also, the slower cooking process allows us to take a bit more time to prepare the side dishes and deserts that make a meal so memorable. Now granted, you may not have the time to do a full roast dinner with all the fixings on a busy Wednesday evening, but perhaps on Sunday or on a special holiday or for guests.

What scares many modern cooks from roasting meat is the memory of how mom or grandma would spend the entire day 'slaving over a hot stove'. The good news is that a bison roast, due to it's low fat content, takes considerably less time to cook than a beef or pork roast. In fact, you might be surprised how fast it goes and make sure that you are prepared with all of the side dishes early. Judy and I cook a roast about once a week in the colder months of the year and here is my sure fire way to roasting a buffalo roast. Remember that roasting is an art and this recipe may take some adjusting based on you oven and cookware. I either roast in a gas convection oven if I have more than one item to bake. Otherwise I use a Delonghi countertop electric toaster oven to save energy. I am including a basic recipe for a 1 to 1.25 Kg oven roast and more comprehensive instructions on the art of roasting if you are interested.

Basic Bison Roast Recipe

Ingredients

1 to 1.25 kg Bison Roast (Rump, Inside Round, Sirloin Tip, Cross Rib)
 Seasoning, Pepper, Garlic and Herbs (Rosemary, Oregano, Sage, etc)
1 cup hot water

1. Thaw roast and season
2. Insert oven proof meat thermometer
3. Place in covered roasting pan without lid
4. Preheat oven to 500° F (260° C) and sear roast for 10 – 15 minutes
5. Lower heat to 275° F (135° C), add 1 cup hot water to roasting pan and cover
6. Check meat thermometer and remove cover from roasting pan
7. When temperature reaches 140° to 145° F (60° to 62° C) remove from oven and place on a warmed serving dish and cover loosely with aluminum foil.
8. Let roast sit for 10 minutes and carve in thin slices with a sharp knife across the grain.
9. Serve and salt as needed at the table.

There are a few important steps involved in the Art of Roasting Bison.

1. Choice of Cut
 - a. Premium Roast (Prime Rib, Rib Eye or Tenderloin)
 - b. Oven Roast (Rump/Inside Round, Sirloin Tip, Cross Rib)
 - c. Pot Roasts (Chuck or Hump) – Slow Cook or Braise in liquid

2. Seasoning
 - a. A bison roast requires less seasoning than other types of meat due to its inherent natural flavors from the slower growth rate on pasture and added maturity of the bison before slaughter.
 - b. Season with pepper, garlic, herbs such as rosemary, oregano and sage.
 - c. No salt before cooking. Salt draws the moisture out of meats making them drier and tougher. Low fat bison meat dries out quicker if it is salted or overcooked. Salt the meat at the table.
 - d. Use Sea Salt or Rock Salt as it is more flavorful than table salt.

3. Searing. Browning the Meat before cooking. There are several options.
 - a. Hot oven 500 °F (260° C) or 10 to 15 minutes
 - b. Hot pan, brown in very hot cooking oil, 2-3 minutes a side
 - c. Bar-be-que on a very hot grill until browned on all sides

4. Cooking. The slower stage of preparing the meat.
 - a. Allow about 35 minutes per kilogram. Take note; a room temperature (preferred) roast will cook faster than a refrigerator temperature roast.
 - b. Lower the cooking temperature to 275° F (135° C) for a conventional oven and 250° F (120° C) for a convection oven.
 - c. Use a covered roasting pan with one cup added hot water.
 - d. Use a meat thermometer and cook until 140° to 145° F (60° to 62°C) for Rare to Medium Rare.
 - e. Never cook a bison roast past medium 155°F (68°C) as the meat is too lean for a well-done roast. If you like well done meat, then try a slow cooked pot roast in liquid or a well marbled beef roast.
 - f. Caramelizing. Remove the lid from the covered roasting pan for the last third of the cooking time to caramelize the meat with dry heat.

5. Resting the Roast. (this allows the juices to migrate back into the roast)
 - a. Remove the roast from the oven and place on a warm platter, cover lightly with tin foil for about 10 minutes.
 - b. Carve the roast with a very sharp knife across the grain of the meat into very thin slices.
 - c. A Prime Rib, Rib Eye or Tenderloin Roast is more tender and can be carved into thick slices like a steak.