

Indigenous Food Hubs

2025 Harvest of the Month



JANUARY: DEER/ELK

CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Many tribes in the northern United States relied on hunting and the meat from their expeditions to feed them through the cold winters. Deer and elk were one of the primary meats they sought out, always thanking the animal for its sacrifice so their community could eat and flourish through the year's harshest months.

AT-HOME ACTIVITY

- Purchase deer, beef and turkey jerky. Do a blind taste test to see which one you prefer.
 - How did the flavors vary?
 - Were you surprised by which one you liked?
 - Did you guess correctly?
- Substitute beef patties for venison patties to make hamburgers and try both.

A MENOMINEE SAYING

“As for this here deer, when it is fall, if he is really fat, it is going to be hard when it will be winter.”

NUTRITION AND FUN FACTS

- Deer and elk are called venison because the word "venison" comes from the Latin word venari, which means "to hunt."
- Elk and deer are a great source of protein, B-vitamins, iron and zinc - all essential nutrients our bodies need.
- Deer is leaner and healthier than beef. Deer has a fat content of 4 grams per 4 ounce serving compared to beef's 17 grams.
- Deer is higher in protein than beef. A 1/4 pound of venison has 25g of protein while the same amount of 80/20 ground beef has 19g.
- Harvesting and processing your own meat is a great way to save money!
- Deer/venison was usually boiled or roasted or cut it into long strips to dry. Tribes used every part of the deer - even the bones.



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RECIPE FOR VENISON STEW



COOK TIME

2 - 2.5 hours



SERVINGS

6

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 pounds cooked venison (or about 2 pounds raw)
- 2.5 cups prairie turnips or potatoes.
- 1 onion (or 1/3 cup dried)
- 3 cups fresh or canned hominy (or 1 to 2 cups dried)
- 8 cups bone broth
- 2 cups canned, frozen or fresh winter squash (or 1 cup dried)



DIFFICULTY:

☒ EASY ☐ MEDIUM ☐ HARD

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut the squash, venison and prairie turnip or potatoes into bite-sized pieces, and dice onions.
2. Put venison, prairie turnip or potato, onion, hominy, and bone broth into a soup pot and simmer for 2 hours, until meat is fork tender. (Note: if using dried squash, add it now in step 2.)
3. Add fresh or frozen squash and heat for an additional 30-45 minutes or cook until squash is tender.
4. Add salt and pepper as needed.

NOTES

- Wild game, including deer and elk can be tougher. Simmer the meat in a small amount of liquid to make it more tender.
- Cook all wild game to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.



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