

Perfect Beef Tenderloin ~ Pâte à Crêpes

Perfect Beef Tenderloin

- Season beef at least a day or two before with salt, pepper, and dried thyme
 - I make a blend of the three and roll the beef in it; the salt will really seep into the beef, so if you are doing this several days ahead, be careful not to over salt it
- Before cooking, bring beef tenderloin to room temperature
- Set oven temperature to 450 degrees
- Cook beef tenderloin on a bed of fresh rosemary in the top rack of your oven until the meat reaches 110 degrees (figure 15 minutes per pound; but that is just approximate)
- Remove from oven and let it rest uncovered for a half hour (it will continue to cook)

120 degrees = rare

125 degrees = medium rare

*I usually take it out at 120 - 125 degrees; depending on the size of your beef, you will have parts that will be more rare and some that will be more cooked

Rick Bayless's version:

- Same as above, except:
- Sear the beef tenderloin on stove top
- Bake it at 300 degrees on a rack over a rimmed baking sheet until the meat reaches 120 degrees
- The lower temperature gives you more control and better texture

Pâte à Crêpes

For approximately 15 crêpes

250 g flour
small pinch salt
1/2 liter milk
3 to 4 eggs (depending on size)
25 g butter

This batter is neutral and can be used for both sweet and savory crêpes.
For sweet crêpes, add 25 g sugar.

You can also replace the milk with water, beer or cider

Put flour and a small pinch of salt in a bowl. Make an opening in the middle and put your eggs into it. Whisk just your eggs and slowly start incorporating the flour around them. When the center mixture becomes too stiff, add a little milk and continue gently whisking the center ingredients and incorporating the flour all around. If you do it this way, you will avoid lumps in the batter. If you do end up with lumps, you can pass the batter through a sieve.

Melt the butter, let it cool and add it at the end.

Let your dough rest overnight. Bring it to room temperature, stir it and start making crêpes.

A good trick for oiling or buttering your pan is to use the end of a potato. Put a fork in it and dip it in the oil or butter, then rub it on your pan; you don't need to oil it every time—just at the beginning and if your batter starts to stick.

Don't worry if the first few crêpes are ruined—that always happens as you adjust the temperature of your pan. In France, they say the first crêpe is for the dog.

Cook until the edges start to lift off the side and you see little holes forming; flip it and cook the second side for about a minute. You want the first side to have nice color, but the second side doesn't need to be as cooked, as it will have the filling. As you cook them, stack them in a plate. They can be eaten right away or refrigerated for a few days

When you are ready, heat them in the pan and put whatever you enjoy in them. Then fold them over the filing and serve

Some suggestions:

A little butter with sugar and lemon

Nutella

- You can dust the sweet ones with confectioners sugar

Ham and gruyère

Smoked salmon with crème fraîche and lemon

Etc.

Buckwheat Crêpes

MAKES ABOUT 4 CUPS BATTER,
ENOUGH FOR 30 CRÊPES

At one time, my fondness for crêpes almost led me to open a crêperie. Friends prevailed and I opened a restaurant instead, but crêpes are still one of my favorite desserts—especially made with buckwheat flour. The batter is best made a day in advance.

Warm in a small saucepan:

2 cups milk
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon sugar
4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter

When the butter has melted, remove from the heat and let cool. Measure into a bowl and stir together:

1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
¼ cup buckwheat flour

Make a well in the flour and stir in:

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
3 eggs

Stir until the batter is stiff and free of lumps. Add the milk mixture, bit by bit, whisking until smooth after each addition. If the batter is lumpy, pour through a strainer. Whisk in:

½ cup beer

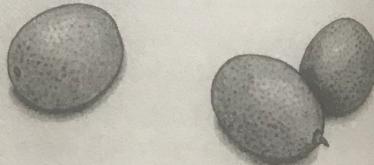
Cover and refrigerate overnight. Take the batter out of the refrigerator 1 hour before frying the crêpes.

Heat a crêpe pan (a 6-inch steel pan with shallow sloping sides) over medium heat. Moisten a folded paper towel with oil and grease the hot pan lightly. Using a small ladle or large spoon, pour in about 2 tablespoons batter. Tilt and rotate the pan to cover it evenly with the batter. Cook until brown, about a minute or two, and with the aid of a butter knife, lift up an edge and

use your fingers to grasp it and flip it over. The crêpe will be very thin and hard to turn with a spatula; using your hands is really the best way and with a little practice, it's easy to do. Cook briefly on the other side, no more than a minute, and turn the crêpe out onto a plate. (As with pancakes, consider the first crêpe or two a test.) Serve the crêpes right away, hot from the pan, or continue to cook crêpes, stacking them one atop the next. The crêpes can sit at room temperature for several hours and be reheated before serving. Spread them with flavored butter; fold them into triangles, like little handkerchiefs, on a baking sheet; sprinkle with sugar; and reheat them in a hot oven for a few minutes. Or reheat them in a frying pan (folded or not). Cooked crêpes (and any unused batter) can be covered and stored in the refrigerator for 2 days.

VARIATIONS

- ♦ Buckwheat crêpes are very good with a compound butter made with citrus juice and zest and sugar. Or spread them with fruit preserves or marmalade.
- ♦ Drizzle buttered crêpes with warm honey.
- ♦ Crêpes can also be taken in a savory direction, with grated Gruyère cheese and ham, for example.



From Alice Waters, *The Art of Simple Food*