

## Pork Tenderloin with Fennel and Grapes

At a farmer's market in Montauk, Long Island, one recent summer, I came across a gorgeous loaf of focaccia bread studded with red grapes and flecked with fennel seeds. I was so taken by the grape-fennel combination that I started experimenting with it back in my own kitchen, and voilà! This easy, elegant dish was born. In it, pork tenderloin is dusted with ground fennel seed, which gives it a flavor reminiscent of sausage. It is served with braised fresh fennel and plump sweet grapes, which are simmered together to make a light and lovely sauce. It is delicious served with Parsley Potatoes, and, come to think of it, it would also be good with focaccia.

Makes 4 servings

1/2 teaspoon ground fennel seeds  
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 pound pork tenderloin  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 medium bulb fennel  
3/4 cup low-sodium chicken broth  
1 1/2 cups seedless red grapes  
1 lemon wedge (1/8 medium lemon)

In a small bowl, mix together the fennel seeds and 1/4 teaspoon each of the salt and pepper. Pat the pork dry with a paper towel, then slice it into 1/2-inch-thick medallions.

Heat the oil in a large skillet (not nonstick) with a cover over medium-high heat. While the pan is heating, sprinkle the fennel mixture on the pork, pressing it in slightly so it adheres.

Cook the pork until browned and slightly blush in the center, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Then transfer to a plate and cover with aluminum foil to keep warm.

Meanwhile, trim the stems and fronds off the fennel bulb, reserving a handful of fronds for garnish. Peel away any bruised outer layers of the bulb, then cut the bulb in half lengthwise. Cut each half into 4 wedges, leaving part of the core attached to each wedge so it stays together.

After removing the pork from the skillet, add the broth, bring to a boil, and stir to dissolve any browned bits left in the pan, about 1 minute. Add the fennel wedges and remaining 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Lower the heat to medium, cover, and cook until the fennel begins to soften, 5 minutes. Add the grapes, increase the heat to high, and cook uncovered until the liquid is reduced by about half and the grapes are warmed and burst, 5 minutes. Squeeze in the juice of the lemon wedge.

To serve, distribute the pork, fennel, and grapes among 4 plates. Drizzle each with about 1 1/2 tablespoons sauce and garnish with some fennel fronds.

*SERVING SIZE 4 or 5 pork medallions, 2 fennel wedges, about 6 grapes, and 1 1/2 tablespoons sauce*

*CALORIES 220; Total Fat 6g (Sat Fat 1.5g, Mono Fat 3.5g, Poly Fat 0.9g); Protein 26g; Carb 15g; Fiber 2g; Cholesterol 75mg; Sodium 400mg*

*EXCELLENT SOURCE OF Niacin, Phosphorus, Potassium, Protein, Riboflavin, Selenium, Thiamin, Vitamin B6, Vitamin C*

*GOOD SOURCE OF Copper, Iron, Magnesium, Pantothenic Acid, Vitamin B12, Vitamin K, Zinc*

*PORK TENDERLOIN is nearly as lean as skinless chicken breast; it's packed with protein and is one of the best sources of B vitamins around, including B12. To keep lean pork juicy and tender, do not overcook it. The latest USDA guidelines confirm that pork chops, roasts, and tenderloin can safely be cooked medium-rare, to an internal temperature of 145°F, followed by a 3-minute rest time.*