



### **St. Mary's County Stuffed Ham**

Featured on the April 6th, 2018 demonstration with Chef Lynne Just, "Exploring the Chesapeake Region."

Stuffed ham is a quintessential holiday dish in St. Mary's County, Maryland—one of the oldest counties in America. Typically served on potato rolls or white bread, this regional specialty of sliced ham has deep culinary roots in Maryland and strong historical ties to Afro-Caribbean and British food cultures. The dish features a corned ham literally stuffed with a mixture of kale, cabbage, onions, and a spicy combination of red and black pepper that packs a punch. Give this recipe a try, or head down to St. Mary's County around major holidays to find stuffed ham served in many local grocery stores and mom-and-pop restaurants.

### **St. Mary's County Stuffed Ham**

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 large firm heads cabbage
- 2 pounds kale
- 1/4 pound watercress (optional)
- 10 large onions
- 1 bunch celery
- 12 spring onions (scallions), white and green parts
- 15 collard leaves (optional)
- 3 tablespoons salt
- 2 tablespoons cracked black pepper or peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 4 tablespoons cayenne
- 2 tablespoons celery seeds
- 3 tablespoons mustard seeds
- 3 tablespoons dry mustard
- 16-to-20-pound bone-in corned ham\* (14 pounds if boned)

#### **Directions**

Place a rack on the bottom of a 30- to 40-quart pot. Fill 2/3 full with water, place on the stove, cover and heat on high until the water boils.

Chop the cabbage, kale, watercress (if using), onions, celery, spring onions and collards (if using). Wrap the chopped ingredients in cheesecloth and immerse in the pot of boiling water for 7 minutes.

While the chopped ingredients are cooking, mix the salt, the cracked, black and cayenne peppers, celery seeds, mustard seeds and dry mustard.

After 7 minutes, remove the chopped ingredients from the water, remove from the cheesecloth and let cool. Keep the covered pot on the stove at a slow simmer. (If you are using boned ham, add bones to the pot at this time.)

Starting at the butt end of the fat side of the ham, with a long, sharp boning knife, cut vertically through the top of the ham, making 5 to 6 lengthwise slits, each 2 inches apart, through to the bone cavity or to the bone (depending on whether you are using a boneless or bone-in ham). Make a second row of 5 slits 2 inches up from the first row, making sure the slits in the second row are not parallel to the slits in the first row. Keep adding rows of slits in this fashion until the surface is covered with the slits. You should end up with 16 to 18 slits. Set aside.

Spread the filling out evenly in a large pan. Add 1/2 of the spice mixture and mix well. Spread the filling out again and add the remaining spice mixture. Mix well.

Pack the stuffing into the slits. Pat the excess stuffing across the top of the ham. Wrap the ham in clean cheesecloth and place in the pot of water. Cook in the covered pot for 1 hour less than 20 minutes per pound. After the ham has cooked this time, turn off the heat and let the ham sit in the covered pot for an hour.

Remove the ham from the pot and place in a large colander to cool. When cool, refrigerate. Stuffed ham is traditionally served cold and sliced for sandwiches.

\* Corned ham is a common item in supermarkets in St. Mary's County. Locally, corned ham can be special ordered from the butcher counter at supermarkets, including Giant and Safeway.



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