

Blood Sausage

By Chuckwagon

Here's my ranch outfit's recipe for **blood sausage**.

Have you ever heard of Kiszka? Well pards, this is it! Otherwise known as "blood sausage", it was my least favorite to make at the ranch because of the inhumane treatment of the poor animal. Now, try to understand... we lived on a cattle ranch. A pig or hog was just not a common sight around the place, but when we heard the distinct sounds of a piggy's squeal, we knew he would be turned into sausage soon. I hated the process. A hog was hung by its hind feet and his throat was cut to let out a controlled volume of blood... slowly. It was horrific. The poor piggy bled to death, squealing for life. I hated being anywhere near the process and still do. My Uncle had married a sweet French woman from Lordes, and indeed, she ran the ranch. Her words became law and everyone in the county loved her. However, whenever my Aunt developed a hankerin' for blood sausage, I invented any excuse I could possibly find to go round up strays! From time to time, she insisted on some Polish "Kiszka", (called Boudin Rouge [red] in French). Other variations include Boudin Blanc (meaning "blood sausage-white"), and Boudin Noir (meaning "blood sausage-black"). Don't confuse this sausage with Cajun Boudin sausage. I still have Margie's recipe (below), and I'm about to share it with you and others who like this type of sausage. In Ireland and England it is called Black Pudding. In Spain, it's Morcilla, and the Germans call theirs Blutwurst.

Virtually every country in the world has its own indigenous and exclusive blood sausage recipe. Why? It utilizes yet another part of a harvested animal in addition to being highly nutritious. Most have "fillers" of some sort. For instance, the English wouldn't think of making blood sausage without rusk, barley, or oatmeal. In the past, during times of war when meat was scarce, most people used some sort of filler simply to add bulk. The Irish used potatoes and of course, still do. In Poland, favorite fillers include barley, semolina, and even rice. Buckwheat groats are also very popular in Polish blood sausages. The Spaniards seem to get carried away using fillers of apple, parsley, eggs, rice, milk, cheese, pimentos, and even almonds. The Swedes love rye and raisins, while in South America, some countries prefer all sorts of wheat and wheat flour, and of course, corn. Fillers from grains must be pre-cooked, or soaked overnight as in the case of oatmeal. (Please note if you choose to use buckwheat groats as a filler, order them from a sausage-making supply house as the factory-processed groats found in a supermarket are not complementary as a filler.)

What kind of blood is used?

I suggest pork blood from the piggy. Technically, the blood of any animal is acceptable. The blood of cattle is almost black and although it is the traditional choice of the English, pork blood is much lighter in color.

How much blood goes into the sausage?

Sixty percent seems to be the upper limit, drawing the line to keep the sausage from being too dark in color and acceptable in texture. Many old timers prefer cold, sliceable, blood sausage eaten directly from the blade of a pocket knife. This sausage usually contains less than 10% blood. Other folks like a little more substantial color and blood "flavor", adding 30% to 60% blood.

Which cuts of meat are used?

Blood sausage has traditionally been made to salvage the least preferred parts of an animal including the skin and inner organs such as the liver. The volume guidelines of each are given in Margie's recipe

below, however the amounts are just suggestions. You may certainly add more or less of any part of the piggy.

Important notes:

Blood provides an ideal atmosphere in which bacteria thrive. For this reason, keep it cold and use it within 24 hours. The blood must be free of coagulated elements and filtered through cheesecloth while cold just prior to being mixed with the meat. If you slaughter your own animal, be sure to continually stir the blood as it is collected, then get it into a refrigerator! Blood may be frozen for future use, but do not add salt to blood believing it will extend its shelf life. It will not. However, added salt for flavor is another matter. Use 1.5% to 2.0% non-iodized or kosher salt. Most folks like onion (chopped) in blood sausage. However, raw onions can be bitter. Lightly pan-fry them before adding them to the mixture. Other favorite spices (or herbs) include pepper, thyme, marjoram, caraway, nutmeg, coriander, and allspice. Last but certainly not least, it must be understood that blood sausage ingredients are cooked before being ground, mixed, and stuffed (with the exception of the blood and fat which undergo a separate process). Follow instructions very carefully.

Bullshipper's Boudin
French Boudin Rouge Blood Sausage

- 1.10 lbs. (500 gr.) pork butt (or other preference)
- 0.10 lbs. (45 g.) pork liver
- 0.10 lbs. (45 g.) pork skin
- 0.50 lbs. (227 g.) pork blood
- 0.40 lbs. (181 g.) barley groats or buckwheat groats
- 3 tspns. (18 g.) salt (not iodized)
- 2 tspns. (4.0 g.) black pepper
- 1 tspn. (2.0 g.) marjoram
- ½ onion (30 g.) chopped onion

Before you start any grinding, (AFTER cooking in this recipe), make sure your blades are sharp. (We have a post in the tech section with sharpening instructions.)

Now that your blade's cutting edges are sharp, they will slice through meat instead of tearing or ripping it. Poach any skin or meat (except the liver), in a little water heated to 185°F. When the meat has cooked and becomes softened, remove it to a cooling rack while continuing to cook any skin. Raise the temperature of the water to 205°F and cook the skin until it has also softened. Meanwhile, boil the groats thirty minutes, stirring them frequently. Remove them from the heat, cover the pot, and allow them to stand in the water another half an hour. Grind the cooked pork through a 3/8" plate and boiled skins through a 1/8" plate. Add the salt and spices to the mixture and blend them thoroughly. Stuff the mixture into your favorite middles, rounds, or synthetic casings, remembering not to stuff them too tightly. On the ranch, we used beef rounds with great success. Pork middles also make fine casings. When your sausages look like they'll win blue ribbons at the fair, place them into boiling water and poach them at 180°F up to an hour-and-a-half, until the IMT reaches 155°F. Immediately submerge the cooked sausages in ice water for a minute, and then allow cold running water to cool them all the way down to 45°F before refrigerating them. This is a cooked-cured type sausage and it must be refrigerated to be stored any length of time. They may be frozen in vacuum bags for future use.

Best Wishes, Chuckwagon