

# Spinach and Blue Cheese Stuffed Flank Steak

Yield: 6 servings

6 bacon slices, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch pieces  
1/4 cup onions, cut into small dice  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1/2 lb. fresh spinach, washed, stemmed and coarsely chopped  
or  
1 small box frozen, chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry  
1 cup fine fresh bread crumbs  
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley  
1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh oregano  
3/4 cup crumbled Pt. Reyes Farmstead Original Blue cheese  
2 teaspoons kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
1 red bell pepper, roasted, peeled and seeded and cut into thirds  
1 (2 1/2-lb) flank steak, trimmed  
Special equipment: kitchen string

Cook bacon in a skillet over moderate heat, stirring, until crisp, then transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain, reserving fat. Add onion and garlic to reserved bacon fat and cook over medium heat until softened, do not brown. Add chopped spinach to pan and continue cooking until spinach is wilted. Remove from heat and stir in reserved bacon, bread crumbs, parsley, oregano, salt, pepper. Mix until combined well.

Put steak on 2 overlapping sheets of plastic wrap (each about 2 feet long) with a short side of steak nearest you. Holding a sharp knife parallel to work surface and beginning on a long side, butterfly steak by cutting it almost in half horizontally (not all the way through), then open it like a book.

Turn steak so a long side is nearest you, then arrange roasted bell pepper pieces evenly over steak, leaving a 1-inch border along edge farthest from you. Top peppers evenly with bread crumb/spinach mixture.

Beginning with side nearest you and using plastic wrap as an aid, roll up steak, gently pressing on filling (do not roll too tightly or filling will slip out from ends), then tie steak crosswise with string at 3/4-inch intervals. Season outside of steak with salt and pepper.

**To cook steak using a charcoal grill:**

Open vents on bottom of grill and on lid. Light a heaping chimney full of charcoal and pour it evenly over 1 side of bottom rack (you will have a double or triple layer of charcoal).

When charcoal turns grayish white (15 to 20 minutes from lighting) and you can hold your hand 5 inches above top rack for 3 to 4 seconds, sear steak on all sides on lightly oiled rack over coals until well browned, 8 to 10 minutes.

Move steak to side of grill with no coals underneath and cook, covered with lid, turning once, until an instant-read thermometer inserted diagonally 2 inches into thickest part of steak registers 125°F, 15 to 20 minutes total.

**To cook steak using a gas grill:**

Preheat all burners on high, then adjust heat to moderately high. Sear steak on all sides on lightly oiled rack over flames until well browned, 8 to 10 minutes.

Turn off burner directly below steak and cook, covered with lid, turning once, until an instant-read thermometer inserted diagonally 2 inches into thickest part of steak registers 125°F, 25 to 30 minutes total.

**Carve steak:**

Transfer steak to a cutting board and let stand, covered loosely with foil, 20 minutes. Beef will continue to cook as it stands, reaching 130°F (medium-rare). Discard string, being careful not to unroll steak, and cut steak into 1/2-inch-thick slices with a sharp knife.

**Cook's notes:**

- ° Steak can be rolled and tied 1 day ahead and chilled, wrapped in plastic wrap.
- ° If you aren't able to grill, steak can be seared in a 12-inch heavy skillet (ends of roll will come up side) in remaining bacon fat or 1 tablespoon oil, turning, 8 to 10 minutes, then transferred to a roasting pan and roasted in middle of a 350°F oven 20 to 25 minutes.