

# ROASTED GARLIC

The first time I ever had roasted garlic was at a restaurant in St. Croix called Tutu Bene's. I viewed it with great suspicion, but since somebody else had ordered it as an appetizer and offered to share, I figured why not. Boy, am I glad I tried it! Roasting garlic properly not only softens it to butter like consistency; it also significantly changes the chemistry of the garlic itself. The flavor of the garlic remains, but is much mellower, and the spicy "bite" is replaced with sweet.

**Garlic Bulbs**

**Olive Oil**

**Salt**

**Pepper**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut the top third off the garlic bulbs, which should expose most of the cloves inside. Take about 5 inches of tinfoil off the roll, and fold it in half to make a square. Wrap it around the garlic bulb, making a cup whose sides don't go much above the cut portion. Drizzle the tops with olive oil, about 1 - 2 teaspoons should do. Wait a minute, then repeat with another teaspoon of oil. Grind some fresh pepper on top, and sprinkle with salt, then place the garlic in a cake pan or pie tin to keep any oil from dripping in your oven. Bake for 45 minutes, then check to see if they're done by poking a toothpick into a few of the center cloves. It should have virtually no resistance when it's done. Sometimes a clove or two will pop out on its own which is another indication it is at least close to being done.

Our favorite way to serve this is with some baked Brie cheese, Gorgonzola cheese, and fresh warm French bread. The garlic can be dug out with a knife or squeezed out like toothpaste, and spreads like butter. Add cheese of your choice and perhaps a glass of wine and it's a piece of heaven on earth. Make sure your spouse or significant other has some too, or she may find your breath a bit overwhelming.

If you have leftovers (and if you were smart you made enough garlic to make *sure* you would have leftovers) try mixing some with your mashed potatoes, or mix with butter to make great garlic butter to use on bread or vegetables, or make my recipe for Chicken Wellington.