Roasting garlic is probably one of the least practiced ways of cooking with garlic, but as those in the know will attest, it is one of the tastiest preparations you can make.

Roasted garlic is sweet, caramelized and so smooth. There is none of the bitterness normally associated with raw or sautéed garlic, and the flavor far surpasses any of the available garlic powders or salts.

Using roasted garlic is as simple as adding it to your favorite foods. In addition to the recipe for roasting garlic, I have included three recipes for its use. As always, experiment, adapt and enjoy.

Roasted Garlic

To roast garlic, lay a bulb on its side and cut across the bulb about 3/4 of an inch from the pointed end, exposing a cross section of about 3-4 cloves. Lay the bulb on its flat, stem side (the uncut side) and loosely wrap the bulb in a cup of aluminum foil. Divide the bulb into halves with about 1/4 teaspoons of olive oil and place in a 350° oven. Bake for about 20 minutes or until the smell is to die for, and the bulb is brown and the cloves are still soft and not "fried" looking.

Remove from the oven and allow to cool. When the bulb is cooled enough to handle, gently squeeze out each clove and set aside. Try to remove all of the cloves.

Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes

5 lbs. cooked potatoes
1 bulb roasted garlic, cloves separated and mashed
1 Tbs. minced fresh parsley
Salt and pepper to taste
1/4 cup flour

While the potatoes are still hot, add the mashed garlic and then mash the potatoes, adding the other ingredients as you normally would. Place the finished potatoes in a casserole dish, bake in a 350° oven for 20 minutes and serve.

Roasted Garlic Butter

1 lb. butter, softened
1 bulb, roasted garlic

Using a wooden spoon and working in a large bowl, mash together the butter and the garlic until the mixture is well blended and uniform.

Place the garlic butter in a ceramic dish and refrigerate until firm. Use as you would regular butter.

Roasted Garlic Sauce

1 quart chicken stock
2 oz. margarine (1/2 stick) or 2 oz. vegetable oil
1 bulb roasted garlic, cloves separated and mashed
Salt and pepper to taste
1 Tbs. minced fresh parsley

Bring the stock to a simmer, covered.
While the stock is coming to a simmer, melt the margarine or heat the oil in a large skillet. Add the flour, and mix to combine into a paste. If too loose, add a bit more flour and if too tight add a bit more of the oil or margarine. Allow the mixture, now properly called a roux, to cook over low/medium heat for about 5 minutes. Do not allow it to brown.

Remove about 1/3 of the stock to a large mixing bowl and add the roux. Using a whisk, dissolve the roux in the stock. When completely dissolved, add the thickened stock back to the remainder of the stock and whisk to completely mix.

Dissolve all lumps before proceeding.
Add the mashed garlic to the thickened mixture and allow the sauce to simmer uncovered over low heat for about 20 minutes. Take care not to allow the sauce to burn. Adjust the consistency if too thick with a little additional stock.

In an earlier generation, the Chofetz Chaim wrote the work, "Guard Your Tongue," in an effort to communicate to the world at large the need to heed that words, once released, can never be recalled.

We were made aware that the spoken word, more than a fist or a weapon, could lay a man low, harming the speaker, the listener and the person who was talked about, in one instant.

From this perspective, Rabbi David Wolpe's quest for insight regarding the spoken word is all the more daring; for not only is the ingredient mercurial, but explosive.

He starts from the harrowing experience of seeing his mother's personality stroke. From this he chronicles his increased awareness of how language functions in connecting us to each other and the world at large; its strengths and limitations.

He brings out the Jewish perspective on speech and brings a fresh look at Moses and even the way the Bible describes the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai.

One of the strengths of this work is that Rabbi Wolpe draws heavily on traditional sources and does not give himself solely to a personal meditation on the nature and value of speech and silence in the Jewish context.

As a result this work is instructive and where he brings his analysis to bear, the result is illumination. This is a worthwhile book and possibly the springboard for a future, more ambitious work.

Vandals hit Ravensbruck & a cemetery

BONN (JTA) - The site of the Ravensbruck concentration camp was slightly damaged by arson and a Jewish cemetery was desecrated in the latest incidents of anti-Semitic vandalism reported in Germany.

Vandals targeted the crematorium of the former women's camp. Ravensbruck is located in the state of Brandenberg, in eastern Germany, near Berlin.