

Apple-Pecan Stuffed Pork Chops w/ Cinnamon Raisin Sauce

FOR APPLE-CIDER BRINE

2 1/2 cups apple cider
2 tablespoons kosher salt, coarse
1 whole bay leaf
1 whole cinnamon stick
2 cups ice

FOR STUFFING

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 medium red onion, chopped
1 large tart apple, small dice
1 cup pecans, toasted & chopped (reserve 1/4 cup for garnish)
1 teaspoon fresh thyme, chopped
2 teaspoons fresh chives, chopped
3/4 cup bread crumbs, plain
1/2 cup apple cider
salt and pepper, to taste



FOR CHOPS:

4 whole boneless pork top loin chops, double-cut thickness w/ pocket cut in each
2 tablespoons brown mustard
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 cup apple cider
1/2 cup chicken stock

FOR SAUCE:

2 tablespoons unsalted butter (divided)
1 medium shallot, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 cup apple cider
1 cup port wine, tawny
1/2 cup raisins
1 teaspoon cinnamon
salt and pepper, to taste

... Instructions on page 2

DIRECTIONS for APPLE-PECAN STUFFED PORK CHOPS

MAKE BRINE:

- put 2 1/2 cups cider, kosher salt, bay leaf and cinnamon stick in sauce pan
- bring to boil... remove from heat... cool for a 5 minutes... add ice
- place chops (pocket already cut) in zip lock bag w/ cooled brine overnight (or 1 hour in vacuum marinader)

2. MAKE STUFFING:

- heat 1 Tbl olive oil in saute pan over MEDIUM HIGH heat
- add red onion & tart apple and saute until onions soften
- add chooped pecans, thyme, and chives... cook for 1 minute
- remove from heat... stir in bread crumbs & 1/2 cup apple cider
- add salt & pepper to taste
- allow to cool

3. TO STUFF & COOK CHOPS: preheat oven to 400 degrees

- spread brown mustard into pocket of each chop
- divide stuffing evenly between chops and fill each pocket
- close each chop w/ toothpicks or cooking twine
- heat t Tbl olive oil in large oven safe saute pan
- brown chops well on each side
- deglaze pan w/ 1/2 cup cider & 1/2 cup chicken stock
- bring to boil and place in oven... check after 20 minutes for internal temperature of 155 - 160 degrees

4. MAKE SAUCE WHILE CHOPS ARE IN OVEN:

- melt 1 Tbl butter in small sauce pan over MEDIUM heat
- add shallot & garlic and cook until shallots are soft (don't burn garlic)
- add cider, port, cinnamon, and raisins... bring to boil... reduce heat to MEDIUM-LOW
- reduce sauce by 1/2 at 'active' simmer
- adjust seasoning w/ salt & pepper
- stir in 1 Tbl butter to finish sauce

5. GARNISH:

- plate w/ chopped chives, a few whole chives, and reserved toasted pecans