

World Gourmet Summit 2003
Culinary Masterclasses

The Cuisine of
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Apple-Brined Pork Chops with Tea-Cognac Raisins



Serves 4

Ingredients

Pork chops :

- 4 large, center-cut loin pork chops, each
- 1 2" thick
- 1 apple, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 3 cups small onion, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsp apple juice
- 5 Kosher salt
- 1 black peppercorns
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 star anise pod
- 4 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp canola oil
- salt and pepper, to taste

Raisins :

- 1 cup Martell Cognac
- 1 cup tea, strongly brewed
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 strip orange zest
- 1 cup California raisins

Garnish:

cilantro sprigs

Preparation

For the raisins: Prepare the raisins at least a week before serving. Mix the Martell Cognac, tea, sugar, cinnamon stick, and orange zest in a small pot and bring to a simmer, stirring constantly to dissolve the sugar. Meanwhile, put the California raisins in a heatproof container or bowl, small enough that the raisins will be completely covered by the liquid. Pour the hot liquid over the raisins, allow them to cool to room temperature, then cover and refrigerate for at least a week.

For the pork chops: Prepare the pork chops a day before serving. Combine the apple, onion, apple juice, salt, peppercorns, cinnamon, star anise, and bay leaf in a medium pot and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and let the brine mixture cool to room temperature. Arrange the pork chops in a deep (non-aluminum) baking dish just large enough to contain all the chops in one layer. Pour the brine mixture over the meat and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Refrigerate overnight, up to 24 hours, turning once.

Method

Pre-heat the oven to 450°C. Remove the raisins from the refrigerator. Remove the chops from the brine mixture and pat dry. Season generously with pepper and lightly with salt. Heat a heavy ovenproof skillet (preferably cast iron) over high heat. Add the oil and swirl to coat. When the oil is almost smoking, add the chops and lower the heat to medium-high. Sear until golden brown (2 – 3 minutes), until the meat feels firm but springy when you press it and the meat near the bone is still pink. Remove from the oven and allow to rest in the hot pan for 5 minutes.

Serving

Serve immediately, using a slotted spoon to place about a tablespoon of raisins alongside each chop. Garnish with cilantro sprigs.