

Cider-brined pork chops with sautéed apples



3 ways with apples

Use them in every course: sautéed over pork chops, roasted in a salad, and baked with an apple-crisp filling

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Cider-brined pork chops with sautéed apples

The only time-consuming part of this recipe is brining the pork, which you do a few hours ahead. The simple sauce is easy to prepare and turns a beautiful caramel color.

PREP AND COOK TIME 30 minutes, plus at least 3 hours brining time

MAKES 6 servings

4 cups, plus $\frac{3}{4}$ cups apple cider

4 tbsp., plus $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. kosher salt

2 bay leaves

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 tsp. red chile flakes

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup chicken stock

2 tbsp. whole-grain mustard

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup crème fraîche

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pepper

Sautéed apples (recipe follows)

1. In a large bowl, mix 4 cups cider, 2 cups cold water, 4 tbsp. salt, bay leaves, garlic cloves, and chile flakes. Add pork chops, cover bowl, and chill, turning meat occasionally, at least 3 hours and up to 1 day.

2. Preheat oven to 325°. Remove pork chops from the brine and blot dry. Melt 2 tbsp. butter in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add pork chops (you

browned. Flip chops and cook another 3 to 4 minutes, until browned on that side. Layer chops in a 9- by 13-in. baking pan and bake until barely pink in the center (cut to test), 15 to 20 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, pour remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cider into the hot frying pan, scraping pan with a wooden spoon to dislodge browned bits. Add the chicken stock, turn the heat to high, and boil until liquid is reduced to about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in remaining 1 tbsp. butter and the mustard. When sauce is no longer bubbling, stir in crème fraîche. Season with remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt and the pepper. Remove the pork from oven and spoon a generous amount of sauce over each chop. Serve topped with sautéed apples.

PER SERVING 435 CAL., 62% (270 CAL.) FROM FAT; 22 G PROTEIN; 30 G FAT (15 G SAT.); 16 G CARBO (1.5 G FIBER); SODIUM DATA NOT AVAILABLE; 113 MG CHOL.

Sautéed apples

Peel and core 3 large apples (any variety) and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick wedges. In a medium frying pan over medium heat, cook the apples with 2 tbsp. butter, 2 tbsp. cider vinegar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt. Cook until apples are soft and golden but not mushy, 4 to 6 minutes.

Roasted apple, bacon, and frisée salad

A happy marriage of sweet, sour, and salty. The warm dressing wilts the frisée slightly, so dress the salad immediately before you serve it.

PREP AND COOK TIME 40 minutes

MAKES 4 to 6 servings

NOTES Crispy frisée lettuce is a nice counterpoint to the rich bacon; substitute 5 sliced raw endives if you prefer.

2 large apples (Braeburn or Fuji), peeled, cored, and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick slices

1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

2 tbsp. maple syrup

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. each salt and pepper, plus more to taste

2 medium shallots, very thinly sliced and separated into rings

3 tbsp. sherry vinegar

4 slices thick-cut bacon, cut crosswise into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-wide strins