

forgiving cut than loin (even master hybridizers have not been able to breed the fat out of pork shoulder, making it the most reliable cut you can buy in a supermarket), but you can still overcook it, and the temptation is compounded by the presence of liquid. Don't be fooled: this is not a dish that requires superlong cooking, and I have found that even large cubes can be done in just over an hour. (My best bet for this dish is about an hour and a

half, but as with all braises, you have to keep checking.)

Finally: apple-and-bacon quiche, an updated version of the classic (and still-wonderful) Lorraine. You can chop or grate the apples; chopped apples leave you with a bit of chew; grated apples give a smooth, silken texture that is quite pleasing. What is really great is the way the sweetness of the apples cuts through the salty pork and cheese, a further extension of this killer combo.

Apple-Stuffed Pork Loin With Moroccan Spices

Time: 1 hour or longer

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 medium apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 boneless pork loin roast, 2 to 3 pounds
- 1 cup apple juice for basting, or more if needed.

1. Heat oven to 450. Put 2 tablespoons of the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. When it starts to foam, add the apples, onion and all the spices, along with some salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the apples and onion are soft, 10 to 15 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, wriggle a thin, sharp knife into each end of the meat, making a kind of pilot hole. Then use the handle of a long wooden spoon to force a hole all the way through the loin. Wriggle the spoon to make the hole as wide as you can. Stuff the apple and onion mixture into the roast from each end, all the way to the center. Sprinkle the roast with salt and pepper.

3. Roast on a rack in a large roasting pan for 15 minutes, then lower the heat to 325. Continue to roast, basting with apple juice about every 15 minutes or so. If the liquid accumulates on the bottom of the pan, use it to baste; if not, add more juice.

4. Start checking the roast after 45 minutes of total cooking time (large roasts can take up to 1½ hours). When it's done, an instant-read thermometer will register 145. Remove the roast and set it on a platter.

5. Put the roasting pan on the stove over one or two burners on medium-high heat.

If there is a lot of liquid, reduce it to about ¼ cup, scraping up any brown bits from the bottom of the pan; if the pan is dry, add 1 cup of apple juice and follow the same process. When the sauce has reduced some, stir in the remaining 2 tablespoons butter if you like. Spoon the sauce over the roast, slice and serve.

Yield: 6 to 8 servings.

Peruvian Pork Stew With Chilies, Lime and Apples

Time: about 1½ hours, largely unattended

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3-4 pounds trimmed boneless pork shoulder, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 large white onions, chopped
- 4 large apples, peeled, cored and roughly chopped
- 3 snipped and seeded ancho or other mild dried chilies
- 3 bay leaves
- Pinch of ground cloves
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 4 cups chicken stock
- Steamed rice for serving
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro.

1. Heat the olive oil in a skillet and brown the pork in it on all sides; you may have to do this in batches for the most efficient browning. Meanwhile, sauté the onions and apples in a pan with the chilies, bay leaves and cloves until the onions are tender, about 10 minutes.

2. Combine all the ingredients in a saucepan, Dutch oven or slow cooker. Bring to a boil, then adjust the heat so the mixture bubbles steadily but not vigorously. (If you're using a slow cooker, turn it to high and walk away for 4 or 6 hours.)

3. Cook, stirring every 30 minutes or so, until the meat is very tender and just about falling apart, at least an hour. Taste and adjust the seasoning, then lower the heat (this will keep well for at least an hour before serving). Remove the meat, then reduce the broth as necessary; serve over steamed rice, garnished with cilantro.

Yield: at least 8 servings.