



Craig Lee / Special to The Chronicle; styling by Kelly Rae Hickman

Provencal Spareribs With Roast Potatoes & Brussels Sprouts

Serves 4

Incredibly easy and happily delicious to chew on. You just toss the ribs with herbs, marinate (you can do this a day ahead), add the vegetables, then slide the whole thing into the oven.

4 pounds pork spareribs, depending on meatiness, or enough for 2 to 3 whole ribs per person

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Generous sprinkling coarse sea salt

5 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds

2 tablespoons fresh rosemary leaves, coarsely chopped

1/4 cup coarsely chopped flat leaf parsley

Several sprigs fresh thyme or about 1/4 teaspoon dried

1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon lavender buds, optional (see Note)

1 pound small creamer potatoes

1 pound Brussels sprouts

2 to 3 cloves garlic, cut into medium-size slivers

Instructions: Cut spareribs into 2-rib portions. In a large bowl, toss ribs with 2 tablespoons of the oil, salt, the

coarsely chopped garlic, the fennel seed, rosemary, parsley, thyme and lavender, if using. Cover and refrigerate for at least an hour or up to a day.

Preheat the oven to 350°.

In a very large, heavy roasting pan (about 13- by 16 inches, or large enough to hold all the ribs and vegetables in a single layer, if possible), place the spareribs with the curved, meatier side down and spoon over any remaining herbs and oil. Roast for 1 hour.

Meanwhile, halve potatoes unless they are small enough for one bite, in which case leave them whole. Parboil the potatoes in well-salted water until not quite tender, about 6 minutes. Trim the Brussels sprouts of any rough outer leaves or damaged spots, then cut them up into chunks and slices, using loose leaves and all. Try to get a mixture of sizes

and shapes for a variety of textures.

Remove pan from oven and turn meat over, placing ribs in the center of the pan. Add the potatoes and Brussels sprouts in a single layer around the ribs, then sprinkle with the garlic and sea salt. Drizzle remaining 2 tablespoons of the oil over the vegetables. Return pan to oven and roast 30 minutes more. Stir the sprouts and potatoes again, pour off excess fat, and roast for another 20 to 30 minutes, until the meat and vegetables are tender. Serve at once.

Note: Make sure the lavender is unsprayed and meant to be eaten.

Per serving: 1,141 calories, 69 g protein, 36 g carbohydrate, 7 g fat (26 g saturated), 259 mg cholesterol, 238 mg sodium, 7 g fiber.