



Menu du Jour

Slow Cooked Pork Chops with Mushroom-Onion Sauce

Paired with Trimbach Gewürztraminer 2001

Tossed Salad with Honey Mustard Dressing

Gingerbread with Lemon Curd

Paired with Beaulieu Vineyard Signet Port 1997

Slow Cooked Pork Chops with Mushroom-Onion Sauce

It's the holiday season and who has time to cook? This recipe may be prepared in the morning and left cooking all day so when you return from shopping, caroling, or whatever, a rewarding meal awaits. Serve with a tossed green salad and crusty bread. The dessert may be prepared up to two days in advance.

4 thick-cut boneless pork chops, about seven-ounces each
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon cracked pepper
1 tablespoon Cajun seasoning
1 large yellow onion, sliced 1/8-inch thick
3 medium Russet potatoes, peeled and sliced 1/4-inch thick
1/4 teaspoon dried sage
2 cups mushroom-onion sauce (see below)

For the sauce:

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, chopped (or 1 (13-ounce) can stems & pieces, drained)
1/4 cup minced yellow onion
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup chicken stock, warmed
1 1/2 cups whole milk or half-and-half
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
Chopped fresh parsley, to taste

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Lightly brown chopped mushrooms and onion in melted butter, cook until the onions are wilted. Add flour, stirring well to incorporate, and then add warmed chicken stock. Simmer, stirring and scraping the bottom of the pan frequently, for approximately five minutes. Stir in milk or half-and-half, thyme, and chopped parsley. Bring to simmer and cook three to four minutes, stirring often. Remove from heat and reserve.

Trim any excess fat from the chops and use it to grease a large sauté pan (add one tablespoon olive oil if necessary). Season chops with kosher salt, cracked black pepper, and Cajun spice.



Over medium-high heat, brown each chop lightly on both sides, about two minutes per side. Layer sliced onions and potatoes on the bottom of the crock pot, cover with seared chops.

Add the sage. Add the prepared sauce into the hot skillet. Scrape the pan juices, simmer for two minutes to reduce, and pour mixture into the crock pot. Cover and cook on low for six to eight hours.

Tossed Green Salad with Honey Mustard Dressing

2 cups mixed field greens
1/4 cup chopped carrots
1/4 cup chopped celery
1/4 cup chopped red onion
8 (1/4-inch) slices peeled cucumber
12 cherry tomatoes
Kosher salt
Cracked black pepper

For the dressing:

1/4 cup Dijon-style mustard
2 teaspoons dried tarragon
1/3 cup clover honey
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
2 teaspoons canola oil
Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste

Prepare dressing:

In a small mixing bowl, combine mustard and tarragon; mix well. Gradually blend in honey. Add vinegar and oil; whisk together well. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate until use.

For the salad:

Combine ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Season to taste with kosher salt and black pepper. Divide into two portions and plate on chilled salad plates. Serve at room temperature drizzled with dressing.



Lemon Curd

Lemon curd is a traditional topping for gingerbread in the United Kingdom. For this presentation, use a prepared gingerbread mix and cook according to package directions. Cool and top with lemon curd.

3 large eggs

1/3 cup fresh lemon juice (do not use bottled lemon juice)

1 tablespoon finely grated lemon peel

3/4 cup granulated sugar

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature

In a stainless steel bowl placed over a saucepan of simmering water, whisk together the eggs, sugar, and lemon juice until blended. Cook, stirring constantly (to prevent it from curdling), until the mixture becomes thick, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and pour through a fine strainer to remove any lumps. Cut the butter into small pieces and whisk into the mixture until the butter has melted. Add the grated lemon peel and cool. The lemon curd will continue to thicken as it cools. Cover immediately (so a skin doesn't form) and refrigerate for up to two weeks.



Preparation & Cooking Photos



Tossed Salad with Honey Mustard Dressing



Sear Seasoned Chops In Sauté Pan Until Golden, About Two Minutes Per Side



Layer Seared Chops Onto Sliced Potatoes And Onions In Crock Pot



Add Reduced Mushroom-Onion Sauce, Cover, And Cook Six To Eight Hours