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Schnitzel and Spätzle

Serves 4-6

These two German favorites, schnitzel and spätzle come together in a delicious, classic pairing! The word “schnitzel” refers to “slice” and further defined in the culinary world as any meat that’s pounded to an extreme thinness, breaded and quick-fried to golden perfection. In Germany, a schnitzel is often made of veal or pork. Our version features the later. A common accompaniment to schnitzel is often buttered spätzle, a quick dumpling-type noodle. The two, together, make a *wunderbar* dinner!

Spätzle Dumplings.

4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon Kosher salt
4 eggs
1-1/4 cups whole milk, divided
Water and salt for cooking
Ice water bath
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Pork Schnitzel

4 center cut, 1/2-inch thick, boneless pork chops
Salt and black pepper
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 eggs, beaten
1 cup fine bread crumbs
Canola oil for frying (or other vegetable oil)

Spätzle Directions:

1. In a stand mixer outfitted with the paddle, mix the flour and salt together until the salt is evenly distributed. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs and one cup of milk (reserve the remaining 1/4 cup).

2. With the stand mixer running on its lowest setting, drizzle in the egg-milk mixture until all is combined. Add the remaining 1/4 cup of milk gradually as needed until a loose dough is formed. The consistency is thicker than cake batter, but less stiff than bread dough – A spoonful of dough on the countertop should spread but not puddle.

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3. Bring 3 quarts of water to a low boil; salt as you would for pasta. Drop threads(*) of the spätzle dough into the boiling water. As the spätzle floats to the top, scoop out with a slotted spoon and transfer to a bowl holding water and ice.

() To make the spätzle threads, press the dough into the hot water through the holes of colander – holes at least 1/4-inch in diameter. Or, begin to “pour” the spätzle dough from the bowl, but use a knife to cut away thin threads from the edge and drop into the hot water. We prefer the latter method because that’s how grandma did it!*

4. Drain the cooked and chilled spätzle in a colander. Melt the butter in a large sauté pan. Add the spätzle and toss gently in the butter. Allow to warm thoroughly and for some brown surfaces to develop. Serve immediately while warm with chopped parsley.

5. If you have any spätzle leftover, chill in the refrigerator and use in the next 3-4 days, or wrap tightly and freeze. Leftover spätzle is wonderful in soup.

Schnitzel Directions:

6. Trim the pork chops of any excess fat. Pound with a meat mallet to a thickness of just 1/4-inch. Season both sides with salt and pepper.

7. Set up an assembly line for the coating phase. Use three shallow plates. Place the flour and salt in the first one; stir to evenly distribute the salt. Place the beaten egg in the second plate, and breadcrumbs in the third.

8. Dip the first pounded pork chop in the flour and salt covering both sides. Gently shake any excess flour back onto the plate.

9. Dredge the pork chop in the beaten egg allowing any excess to drip back onto the plate.

10. Finally, place the pork chop on the bread crumbs, press lightly to coat, turn and repeat on the other side. Set aside the coated pork chop, repeat with the remaining chops.

11. In a large sauté pan, heat about 1/2-inch of oil to medium heat; 330°F is the ideal temperature.

12. Fry the breaded schnitzels in the hot oil one side at a time until they turn a nice golden brown. Do not crowd in the pan; depending on the size of your pan, fry two at a time, or if using a smaller pan, one at a time. Allow the schnitzel to lie flat in the pan while frying. Transfer the fried schnitzels to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Plan to serve while still hot.