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Braised Pork Shoulder with Apples & Onions

Serves 4-6

This pork dish so simple to make! It achieves maximum flavor impact from the slow braising process that includes apple cider and apple cider vinegar. An economical cut of meat, the picnic cut pork shoulder transforms into tender, flavorful bites. The experience is rounded out with the juicy, softened braised apples and onions. Make it a meal by serving this dish with roasted Brussels sprouts and pureed, creamy parsnips.

Ingredients:

3-4 lbs pork shoulder (picnic cut)
3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
Freshly ground black pepper
Kosher salt
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 tablespoon butter
2 large onions, sliced pole to pole, 1/4" slices
2 cups apple cider
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
5 sprigs fresh thyme
2 apples, sliced in large wedges
5 cloves garlic, minced
1" ginger, peeled and minced

Garnish:

Fresh thyme

Serve with:

Pureed Creamy Parsnips - Steam the parsnips until tender, then puree with an immersion blender, add a couple tablespoons of half and half, kosher salt, and pepper.

Roasted Brussels Sprouts - Halve the Brussels sprouts, toss with minced garlic, olive oil, kosher salt, and pepper, Roast for 15-20 minutes or until tender and the edges slightly caramelized.

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F.
2. Trim any excess fat off of the pork shoulder. Rub the Dijon mustard all over the pork and generously sprinkle with pepper and salt.
3. On the stove top, In a braiser, brown each side of the pork shoulder in canola oil over medium-high heat until nicely browned on all sides. Remove from the braiser and set aside.
4. Add the butter, and sauté the onion until they begins to soften.
5. Add to the onions the apple cider, apple cider vinegar, thyme, and apple slices.

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6. Place the browned pork back into the braiser placing it on top of the onions and apples. Rub the garlic and ginger over the pork and cover the braiser with a lid.
7. Place the braiser in the oven and bake for about 2 to 2.5 hrs, or until the meat is so tender that it begins to fall off the bone.
8. Remove the tender pork from the braiser and transfer to a cutting board. Using two forks, pull the meat into bite-sized chunks.
9. Skim any excess fat from the braising liquid. Serve the pork with a spoonful of the braising liquid and a side of the cooked apples and onions. Make it a complete meal with a puree of parsnips and roasted Brussels sprouts.