

Churston Traditional

FARM SHOP

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CHURSTON FARM SHOP RECIPES AUGUST 2019

If you're heading off for a picnic any time soon then make it a real occasion. And there's no better way of doing that than to produce a large, home-made pork pie.

It's the sort of thing the Victorians would have had their cooks prepare for a picnic on the river or up on the moors. And although no-one employs cooks any more it's not a difficult recipe to execute.

Pork remains extremely good value and, as this month's recipe show, is the most versatile of meats, lending itself to serious suppers, snack meals or special event dishes and capable of being married with an infinite number of seasonings and flavourings. No cook, we always say, is ever going to be stuck for ideas as long as there is pork to turn to.

PORK, APPLE AND CIDER PIE

Ingredients. For the filling: 1.5kg pork shoulder meat, 175g lean bacon, diced, 75g dried apple rings, 275 ml farmhouse cider, tablespoon chopped fresh sage, about ten gratings of nutmeg, teaspoon of allspice, two teaspoons anchovy essence.

For the pastry: 450g plain flour, teaspoon salt, 275g butter, two eggs and one egg yolk, three tablespoons cold water, beaten egg to glaze. For the jelly: 900g pork bones and a pig's trotter, 900ml farmhouse cider, a carrot, an onion, bouquet garni of parsley, thyme and bay leaf, handful of black peppercorns, salt, pepper.

Method. The night before you plan to cook, chop the dried apple rings and leave to soak in the half pint of cider overnight. Place all the ingredients for the jelly, apart from the salt and pepper, in a large pan, add enough water to cover and simmer for three hours. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean pan, reduce over a high heat to about a pint, season to taste and leave to cool. For the filling, whizz half the pork and bacon in a food processor until roughly chopped and finely dice the remainder by hand. Mix together with the seasonings and the cider-soaked apple in a large bowl. Add a little salt and pepper, then fry a small piece and taste to help you adjust the seasoning (remember: a dish that is going to be eaten cold will need to be fairly highly seasoned).

For the pastry, rub the butter into the flour and salt (or use a food processor), beat together the water, two eggs and the yolk and gradually work into the mixture to make a soft dough. Use two-thirds to line a greased eight-inch cake tin. Pack in the pork and top with the remaining pastry, brushing the edges with beaten egg to seal the lid. Brush the top with the remaining egg, make a half-inch hole in the centre and insert a tube of baking parchment. Bake for 30 minutes in an oven preheated to 200C gas mark 6, then reduce to 180C gas mark 4 and cook for a further hour and a half. Remove and leave to cool completely. Warm the jelly through and pour carefully into the hole in the lid. Refrigerate overnight before serving.

SLOW-BRAISED BELLY PORK WITH GARLIC AND GINGER

Ingredients for four to six. 1.35kg piece of belly pork, four tablespoons dry sherry, two star anise, small cinnamon stick, 20g root ginger, thinly-sliced, teaspoon dried chilli flakes, 225ml soy sauce, tablespoon redcurrant jelly, three tablespoons balsamic vinegar, 100g whole peeled garlic, water, oil.

Method. Place the pork in a wide, shallow pan, cover with water, bring to the boil, skim off any impurities, add the sherry and simmer for 30 minutes. Add the ginger, chilli flakes, soy sauce, redcurrant jelly, balsamic vinegar, star anise and cinnamon, cover and cook gently for two to three hours, carefully turning the meat several times. Add the garlic after one hour. When cooked, remove the meat and strain the stock into a clean pan and reduce to a syrupy consistency. Slice the cooked pork and char grill it until crisp, pour the sauce over and serve.

PORK AND APPLE BURGERS

Ingredients for four. 500g cubed pork shoulder, one large dessert apple, peeled and grated, two tablespoons finely-chopped shallot, one beaten egg, 25g home-made white breadcrumbs, tablespoon mixed, finely-chopped fresh rosemary, sage and thyme, generous pinch ground nutmeg, teaspoon sea salt, 20 grindings black pepper. To serve: four large burger buns, thinly sliced onions, thinly sliced sweet Polish gherkins, two generous tablespoons mayonnaise mixed with two teaspoons whole-grain mustard, lettuce.

Method. Either mince the pork or pulse in a food processor – though be careful not to let it turn into a paste. Place in a bowl with the remaining ingredients, mix well, cover and refrigerate for two hours. Fry a small piece of the mix and test for seasoning. Form into four burgers and shallow-fry in sunflower oil for three minutes each side. Serve in burger buns, spreading the cut sides with the mayonnaise and adding slivers of onion and gherkin and some shredded lettuce to each.