

Slow- Cooked Pork Shoulder with Cider, Apples & Shallots

Serves 6

Slow-cooked pork with the perfect crispy crackling, this dish, when brought to the table is a real show-stopper. Perfect for using up old apples, this succulent dish is cooked in cider along with the apples and sweet shallots, the meat is tender and soft.

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 4 hours (includes resting and potato cooking)

INGREDIENTS

2kg pork shoulder with rind
Sea salt and cracked black pepper
2 apples, quartered
3 shallots, halved
2 celery sticks, roughly chopped
3 large garlic cloves, skins attached
1 bay leaf
1 tablespoon fennel seeds
800ml chicken or vegetable stock
200ml dry cider
1 tablespoon plain flour

For the Mustard Potatoes

750g baby or midi potatoes, larger potatoes cut in half
2 teaspoons wholegrain mustard
1 tablespoon mixed herbs
1 tablespoon rapeseed oil

METHOD

Perfect for this is: Le Creuset Cast Iron 29cm Oval Casserole

Preheat the oven to 220°C/ Gas Mark 7

1. Thoroughly dry the pork joint with kitchen roll before seasoning the meat with salt and pepper. Score the rind with a sharp knife before rubbing in a good handful of salt. Place the joint in the Cast Iron Oval Casserole and place in the hot oven without the lid for 30 minutes.
2. When the rind begins to blister and crackle, remove the joint from the oven and turn down to 170°C/ Gas Mark 3.
3. Nestle the apples, shallots, celery, garlic, bay leaf and fennel seeds under and around the pork. Pour in the stock and cider so the joint is half covered with liquid and put on the lid. Place in the oven and cook for 3 hours.
4. After 3 hours the meat should be tender but still holding form. Remove from the oven and turn the oven back up to 200°C/ Gas Mark 6. Carefully remove the joint, shallots and apple pieces from the cooking liquid. Using a sharp knife, carefully

remove the crackling from the joint. Cover the joint with foil and allow to rest whilst you cook the potatoes and finish the crackling.

5. Place the potatoes in a baking tray and coat well with the mustard, herbs, oil and a little seasoning. Add the crackling to the baking tray and place in the oven. Cook for 50 minutes turning the potatoes a couple of times during cooking and remove the crackling once crisp.
6. Pour the cooking liquid through a sieve into a clean saucepan. Place over a medium heat. Take 2-3 tablespoons of liquid and combine with the flour in a jug to create a thick paste. Whisk the flour back into the pan and simmer until thickened. Season to taste (and add gravy browning if desired).
7. Thickly slice and serve the pork and potatoes alongside the apple and shallot pieces and pour over the gravy. Serve with seasonal greens and crackling.

Cook's Notes

- Don't worry that your crackling softens slightly when cooking the pork with the lid on. Once the rind is returned to a hot oven with the potatoes it will crisp up to make for the perfect crackling to accompany the pork.

