

Pork Chops with Mushroom Bread Pudding

Juices from the browned chops seep into the bread pudding, flavoring it as it bakes. We used 1"-thick chops. If yours are thicker, put them in the oven sooner rather than cooking the bread pudding longer, so the eggs don't curdle.

Recipe Cookbook: Food and Wine Quick from Scratch

Prep Time: 15 minutes Cooking Time: 48 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

2 TBS butter	1 onion, chopped
3/4 lb mushrooms, cut into thin slices	1 rib celery, chopped
1 tsp dried thyme	1 tsp salt
1/2 lb baguette, or other crusty bread, cut into 1/2" cubes (about 1 qt)	
1/2 tsp fresh ground black pepper	3 eggs, beaten to mix
1 1/3 C canned low sodium chicken broth	2/3 C half-and-half
1 TBS cooking oil	
4 center-cut pork chops, about 1" thick (about 2 lbs in all)	

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 325° F. Butter 9-by-13-inch baking dish or a gratin dish of similar size. In large nonstick frying pan, melt butter over moderately low heat. Add onion + celery - cook, stirring occasionally, till starting to soften (about 3 minutes). Increase heat to moderately high. Add mushrooms + thyme - cook till mushrooms start to brown about (about 5 minutes). Remove pan from heat. Stir in bread cubes, 3/4 tsp salt + 1/4 tsp pepper. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish.

Stir together broth, eggs + half-and-half - pour mixture evenly over mushrooms and bread. Put dish in lower third of oven - bake 25 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat oil in frying pan over moderate heat. Sprinkle remaining 1/4 tsp each salt + pepper over chops. Add chops to pan and brown (about 3 minutes per side). Remove chops from pan. Remove bread pudding from oven after it bakes for 25 minutes and set chops directly on top. Return to oven - cook till meat is done and pudding is just set (10-15 minutes longer).

Tips - Wine Recommendation: Pork and mushrooms each have an incredible affinity for pinot noir, so this combination of the two makes for an easy choice. Favor a slightly earthy French Burgundy over its fruitier brethren from other countries.

Serves: 4