

Roast Pork Loin with French Plum Sauce

This dish combines the inherent sweet and tart flavors of plums, orange and lemon with salt from soy, balanced with slightly bitter ginger. For maximum flavor marinate the mild and sweet pork in the spice paste for two hours at room temperature or overnight.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pound pork loin roast on the bone or 3 pound boneless pork roast
- ½ inch fresh ginger, peeled, cut into 18 thin slivers
- 3 cloves garlic, cut into 18 slivers

Spice Paste:

- 1 tablespoon finely minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger
- Grated zest of 2 oranges
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- ¼ cup fresh orange juice
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder
- Freshly ground black pepper

Sauce:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small red onion, diced
- 2 tablespoons reserved spice paste
- 12 plums, cut in half, pit removed (see Note)
- ½ cup fresh orange juice
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce

- ½ cup red wine
- 2 tablespoons plum brandy, optional
- 1 or 2 tablespoons honey, optional
- Lemon juice for balance, optional

INSTRUCTIONS: Have the butcher remove the chine bone from the ribs for easy carving. Insert slivers of ginger and garlic in between the bones and into the top and side of the roast.

For the spice paste: This is where a mini-food processor comes in handy. Put in the garlic and grated ginger and process to a paste; add the zests, orange juice, soy sauce, five-spice powder and pepper and pulse once. Set aside 2 tablespoons of the finished paste to use in the sauce. Rub the remaining spice paste onto the meat. Marinate for at least 2 hours at room temperature or overnight in the refrigerator. Bring the meat to room temperature for 30 minutes before

cooking.

Cooking the roast: Preheat oven to 450°. Place the pork in a roasting pan, bone side down. Roast for 15 minutes, and then lower the oven temperature to 300°. Roast for 40 to 50 minutes longer, or until an instant read thermometer registers 140°. (The temperature will continue to rise as the meat rests.) Remove the roast to a carving board, tent loosely with foil and rest for 15 minutes.

While the pork roasts make the plum sauce.

For the sauce: In a medium saute pan, warm the oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for about 5 to 10 minutes, until tender. Add the reserved spice paste and cook a minute longer. Add the plums, the juice, soy, wine and brandy, if using, and simmer covered for about 15 minutes over low heat. Turn off the heat and let the plums relax and give off their juice. After 15 minutes taste the sauce. Now taste the

wine. Add honey if the sauce seems too tart, or a squeeze of lemon juice if the fruit is exceptionally sweet. You may not need anything if the plums were neither too tart nor too sweet.

Slice the pork between the bones, giving everyone a chop. Serve each chop with plum sauce.

Variations: If you used a boneless pork roast you have two options. Sear the meat on stovetop and then and roast in a 400° oven for about 30 minutes, or cook it on the grill until it reaches about 140 internal temperature for slightly pink.

Note: Use either the small French plums or Italian blue plums. They are not overly sweet nor are they too zingy.

Serves 6

PER SERVING: 480 calories, 54 g protein, 18 g carbohydrate, 19 g fat (6 g saturated), 147 mg cholesterol, 968 mg sodium, 2 g fiber.