

Herb Rubbed Pork Loin

serves 6

the Brine (adapted from *the girl & the fig Cookbook*)

3 bay leaves

1/2 Tablespoon black peppercorns

1/2 Tablespoon crushed red pepper

3/4 Tablespoon dried thyme

1 Tablespoon fresh garlic

1 cup sugar

1/4 cup salt

1 gallon water

3 pound center cut pork loin

Use a spice grinder or mortar and pestle to crush bay leaves, peppercorns, crushed red pepper, and thyme into a fine powder. Combine with water, salt, and sugar in a large bowl that fits in your refrigerator. (I use a large food grade plastic container with a lid). Stir until sugar and salt dissolve.

Take the pork loin and slice it horizontally along its length 3/4 of the way through its diameter. (See picture above) Place loin in brine, cover, and chill for 12 to 36 hours. The meat will absorb all the incredible flavors from the brine.

the Marinade

1/2 cup fresh parsley

2 Tablespoons fresh thyme

1 Tablespoon fresh rosemary

1 teaspoon dijon mustard

2 Tablespoons white wine vinegar

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/4 cup olive oil

Place all of the above ingredients in a blender or food processor and process until smooth. At least one hour before cooking pork loin, cut 4-5 pieces of butcher twine 8-10 inches long. Lay the twine on a cutting board parallel to each other and 1 1/2- 2 inches apart. Remove loin from the brine. Lay loin across the twine. Rub the interior fold of the meat with the marinade. Close the fold and tie the twine around the loin. (see picture above) Place loin in large dish or tray. Rub exterior of meat with the remainder of the marinade. Chill at least 30 minutes. Remove from refrigerator and let sit covered at room temperature for an additional 30 minutes before cooking.

Grilling the Pork Loin

Heat gas grill on medium heat. You need to cook the meat indirectly. If your grill has three burners, turn on the outer two and leave off the middle burner. If your grill has two burners, light one and leave the other off. You will need to rotate the loin halfway through to ensure even cooking.

Once grill is hot, cook loin directly over the heat, turning to sear on all sides. This should take about 20 minutes. Then move the loin to position away from heat elements. Cover grill and allow to cook 45-60 minutes. Brush meat with any left over marinade up until the last 10 minutes of cooking. Test meat with an instant read thermometer. Pull it off the grill when the internal temperature reaches 150 degrees. Loosely cover loin with foil and allow to rest 10 minutes before carving. Slice loin in 1/4 to 1/2 inches slices. Serve with Onion, Raisin, and Garlic Compote.

Roasting the Pork Loin

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Heat roasting pan on stove top over medium heat. Add 3 Tablespoons of oil. Sear meat on all sides.

Place the roasting pan with pork loin in heated oven. Roast until the internal temperature reaches 150 degrees. Loosely cover loin with foil and allow to rest 10 minutes before carving. Slice loin in 1/4 to 1/2 inches slices. Serve with Onion, Raisin, and Garlic Compote.

Onion, Raisin and Garlic Compote

from *the Bon Appetit Cookbook*

makes 2 cups

1 pound pearl onions (frozen)

1/4 cup butter

24 whole garlic cloves, peeled

1 bay leaf

1 1/2 cups tawny Port

1/4 cup white wine vinegar

4 teaspoons sugar

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup raisins

1 1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic and bay. Cook until the garlic begins to brown. Add the Port, vinegar, sugar, salt, onions, and raisins. Cook until mixture reduces and becomes syrupy. Stir frequently. Add thyme and cool. Serve warm.