

Slow cooked 'Pot roast' of Pork shoulder

with crackling & root vegetables



By Neil McCready

SERVES 4-6

INGREDIENTS

Equipment, wide shallow pan to fit on stove and within oven, Large non-stick frying pan
Cooking time 4-5 hours

¼ or roughly 2kg of a whole pork shoulder, boned out, unfiled, skinned but skin reserved.

(A good butcher such as Wait Mason will do all this for you!)

1 small onion

1 large parsnip

1 large carrot

1 medium swede

3 sticks celery

4 cloves of garlic-left intact, skin and all

1 sprig thyme

1 sprig rosemary

1 bay leaf

2 or 3 Pork or Chicken stock cubes, enough to render sufficient liquor to cover your ingredients during cooking

METHOD

- Line a tray with baking parchment and pre-heat your oven to gas 4/190°. Lightly oil the parchment and place your reserved pork fat skin side up and sprinkle generously with Maldon sea salt, lightly oil the skin too and place in the top shelf of your oven and forget about for at least 45 minutes.
- Choose a deep pot which will both fit on your stove and in your oven, fill it ½ way with cold water, add the stock cubes, thyme, rosemary, bay & garlic and bring to the boil and then reduce to a steady simmer, this is your cooking liquor/stock.
- Cut your pork into good chunks about the size of a 'small hand full', peel and roughly dice the carrot, onion, celery, parsnip & swede also and set to one side.
- In a hot, oiled, large frying pan brown the pork and vegetables on all sides in many separate batch's as to not over crowd the pan and to get good colour on your ingredients to later render a dark rich sauce. Once all the meat and vegetables are browned place all in the simmering liquor.
- Check that the liquor is just covering your ingredients, if not just add enough water to do so, then cover with foil and place in the middle of your oven at the same temperature as the crackling for a minimum of 3 ½ hours, but may well go up to 4 ½.
- After 45 minutes remember to check your crackling, cooking time always varies with this so just keep checking it by tapping the centre with a spoon and you are after a brittle firm hollow sound. Once achieved remove the crackling and allow to cool for an hour and then break it up however desired.
- After 3 ½ hours check the pork, using a slotted spoon or ladle remove a piece of pork and if a fork does not fall through it with ease, it's not ready yet, but check every 30 minutes from now until this is achieved.
- Once the pork is very tender as described, return the whole pot roast back to the stove and remove as much of the pork & vegetables from the liquor using your slotted utensil as possible just set these aside for a moment. Turn the heat up full and boil the liquor down by half until it is a little darker & thicker in appearance, once reduced taste the liquor and season accordingly, you may find it needs nothing though, if you wish to render excess sauce feel free to thicken it earlier with cornflour or thickening granules.
- Once your sauce is 'fixed' return all the vegetables, meat back to the pan, disregard the herbs if you can and squeeze the garlic into the sauce, if you left the garlic intact it will turn sweet and mellow within the skin and not at all harsh or pungent. Keep warm and serve straight away or cool down and serve later with crusty bread, crackling & maybe some mash, enjoy.....