



Bohemia – now part of Czechia (Czech Republic), Eastern Europe

Pork, Dumplings, & Sauerkraut

Vepřo knedlo zelo prepared in an easy style

Brining Liquid for Pork

2 cups water

1/2 cup salt

1/2 cup granulated sugar

1/2 teaspoon thyme

2 teaspoons pickling spice

4 cloves garlic, sliced open

5-1/2 cups crushed ice

4 boneless pork loin chops (3/4 inch thick) (5.49 lb.)

2 Tablespoons vegetable oil

3 Tablespoons unsalted butter

1 (16 ounce) container European sauerkraut drained

1 teaspoon caraway seeds or as desired

1/2 cup apple juice

1/2 cup cold water

2 teaspoons all-purpose flour

Garnish: chopped chives or green onions; crushed croutons as desired.

Prepare Brine: Bring water to boiling in medium saucepan. Add salt, sugar, thyme, pickling spice, and garlic. Stir to dissolve salt and sugar. Transfer to a medium bowl; add crushed ice Stir until brine is cool. Add pork chops, cover; chill in the refrigerator for at least 8 to 12 hours.

Cook Pork Chops:

- Pat chops dry with paper towels.
- Heat large cast iron or heavy skillet to medium high, add oil. Add chops to hot oil. Sear on one side, without moving at all until golden brown on first side, about 3 to 4 minutes; flip; sear other side until browned, about 4 minutes.
- Check with a meat thermometer for internal temperature 135 Degrees F. Drain off any excess fat, place over medium heat. Add butter, cook until butter is foamy. Carefully tip skillet and using a large spoon, baste chops repeatedly with melted butter until butter is brown and smells nutty, about 2 to 3 minutes.
- Transfer pork chops to plate, rest for 10 minutes. Set brown butter aside to stay warm.

Cook Sauerkraut:

- In clean skillet, add drained sauerkraut, caraway seeds, and apple juice; sauté 1 minute.
 - Stir 1/2 cup cold water with 2 teaspoons flour, stir until dissolved. Add sauerkraut; cook over medium/low heat, stirring until thickened.
 - Serve warm sauerkraut with pork chops; sprinkle with chopped chives or green onions and crushed croutons as desired.
 - Garnish with fresh thyme sprigs. Serve warm with sauerkraut
- Yield: 4 pork chops with sauerkraut

Cook's Note: Prepare the brine in the evening, place in the refrigerator. In the morning, place the pork chops in the brine. When you return for dinner, they are ready for pan frying.

About the Recipe: If you love comforting meals with a splash of beer on the side, you will love this classic dish. It highlights the popular flavors of their country, prepared in an easy style. Since you brine the pork chops ahead of time, it is easy to prepare it after work. Finger dumplings are quick to cook, needing only about 3 minutes, and with a little help from a flavorful European sauerkraut, the dinner almost makes itself.

How is the Classic Pork Dish Prepared-

Vepřo knedlo zelo is the national dish of the Central European country of Czechia. It is usually served for special occasions like Easter. The entrée is made of pork loin roasted in onion and caraway gravy and served over sauerkraut with a side of the boiled bread dumplings called knedliky. It is a dish featured at many restaurants in Czechia. You will find their cuisine serves pickled cabbage and lots of root vegetables. Caraway seeds and onion are popular flavorings.

For Information about Bohemian-American Recipes See:

Bohemian American Cook Book, Marie Rosicky. 1949, Automatic Printing Company