

Pork, stuffed and otherwise

From Aunt Olivia's Kitchen

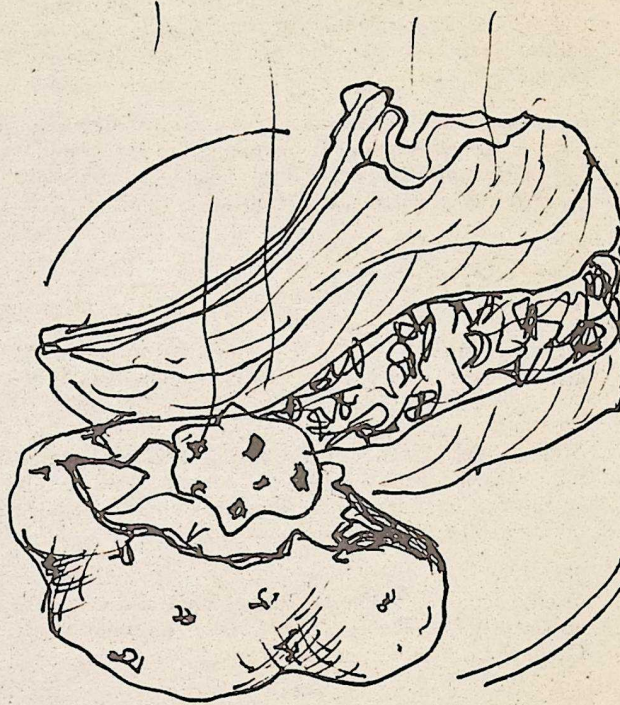
Aunt Olivia seldom served pork during the hottest part of the summer, and roast pork appeared on her table only during winter months, but this time of year, even though summer was hardly more than a deep breath away, baked pork chops or stuffed pork tenderloin were favorite main courses on cool evenings. We all looked forward to supper when **Baked Pork Chops** with baked potatoes were featured.

Start with turning on the oven and setting the thermostat at 350°; scrub half-a-dozen baking potatoes and stab each one a couple of times with a fork so none will burst while baking. Pop them into the oven.

6 centercut pork chops **1 C. hot water**
3 T. cooking oil **¼ t. salt**
2 large onions **½ t. pepper**

In a large skillet, over medium heat, brown chops and onions (which have been peeled and cut into chunks) in oil until chops are golden on both sides and onions begin to brown on their cut edges. Remove chops from skillet and arrange in a single layer in a shallow casserole. Fill spaces around chops with onions. Drain oil from skillet, but do not scrape. Pour enough hot water into the skillet to loosen any cooked-on bits of meat or onion. Add rest of water and seasonings. Pour around chops. Cover closely and bake about an hour until potatoes are fork-tender. Thicken pan juices with 2 T. of flour stirred into ¼ C. cool water if gravy is desired. Makes six servings.

Alternatively, prepare **Stuffed Pork Tenderloin**. When purchasing this delicacy, I figure a third-of-a-pound per person; for six, I need about two pounds. Begin in a similar way by mixing up a small quantity of bread stuffing (see recipe below). If tenderloin is frozen, thaw complete and pat dry with paper towels. I prefer the small unfrozen ones, although I can't always find them at the meat counter. With a sharp knife, slice tenderloin almost in half, lengthwise, spreading the two halves open. (This is called butterflying I learned recently. Aunt Olivia never used the term.) Then cut the tenderloins in half, crosswise. Each piece will make one serving, so if your tenderloin is large, divide again, crosswise.



In a large skillet, sear meat in hot oil, turning once, and removing as soon as both sides are brown. The meat will shrink alarmingly, but don't worry. To the same pan, add two large onions, peeled and cut in chunks; lower heat and saute onions while you arrange half the pork in a single layer in a 3" deep casserole. Over each piece of pork spoon a heap of stuffing. Top with another layer of meat. Fill spaces between tenderloins with sauteed onions. Cover tightly and bake 45 minutes at 350°. Remove cover and return to oven 15 minutes longer.

Aunt Olivia's **Bread Stuffing** for either chicken or pork was seasoned primarily with ginger rather than sage because Uncle Henry preferred it that way. In mixing stuffing for enough pork tenderloin for six people, Aunt Olivia used about two cups of dried breadcrumbs. She always dried any scraps of stale bread in a shallow pan kept for that purpose on a shelf above her black iron kitchen stove, but I keep a supply of bread heels for making stuffing in a plastic bag in my freezer. Because the bread I use is not completely dried out, I need more crumbs.

1 C. finely chopped celery **Enough ginger ale to moisten**
¼ C. green pepper, chopped **3 C. bread crumbs**
6 scallions (tops, too) **¼ t. powdered ginger**
chopped **Pinch of poultry seasoning**
Half a stick of margarine **1/8 t. pepper**
1 t. salt **1 egg, slightly beaten**

In a large skillet, melt margarine, add celery, green pepper and scallions. Saute vegetables slowly over low heat, stirring occasionally, until golden and tender. Add salt and set aside. In a large bowl, combine bread crumbs, ginger, pepper, and poultry seasoning. Pour about a quarter of a

cup of ginger ale over crumbs while tossing with a fork. If crumbs are soft, you may need less than half-a-cup; if dry, use a little more than half-a-cup of ginger ale. (Too much will make the mixture soggy.) Toss with beaten egg, then with sauteed vegetables. Allow to rest while you prepare pork for oven.

Traditionally in the Lovell family, pork was accompanied by baked potatoes. This was so even when stuffing might have been a sufficient substitute. You may choose to serve an extra vegetable rather than potatoes if you have made plenty of stuffing to go around. In either case, you'll want a salad; to give zip to a simple lettuce and tomato salad, mix a zesty low-calorie **Yogurt Salad Dressing**.

1 egg yolk **¼ t. paprika**
¼ t. salt **¾ C. low-calorie yogurt**
¼ t. dry mustard **1 T. lemon juice**

In a small bowl, beat egg yolk, salt, mustard, and paprika until fluffy. Gradually add yogurt alternately with lemon juice, beating after each addition. When smooth and the consistency of thin mayonnaise, refrigerate until ready to use. Makes one cup.

A main course of pork, whether roast, chops, or tenderloin, calls for a light and bright dessert. **Orange Chiffon Pie** fills this bill and, as an added advantage, can be made ahead and refrigerated until serving time.

2 T. grated orange peel **2 oranges, peeled, finely cut,**
2 T. plain gelatine **and well-drained**
1¼ C. orange juice **½ t. cream of tartar**
¼ C. lemon juice **¼ C. sugar**
4 eggs, separated **1 9" graham cracker crumb**
¾ C. sugar **crust**
¼ t. salt **1 C. whipping cream**
1 small can Mandarin oranges

Separate eggs. Brush pie crust with yolk of one egg; bake crust 5 minutes in a 400° oven. Set aside to cool while you prepare filling. Reserve the four egg whites in a medium bowl. Grate peel and set aside. Soften gelatin in orange and lemon juices. In a small bowl, beat the three remaining egg yolks thoroughly, then pour them into the top of a double boiler. Beat in sugar and salt; beat while gradually adding gelatin/juice mixture. Cook over hot water until slightly thickened and gelatin is dissolved . . . about eight minutes. Remove from heat and stir in grated orange peel. Let stand until lukewarm, then stir in drained cut up oranges. Place in refrigerator until mixture begins to thicken. Meanwhile, whip the cream and beat the whites of the four eggs until foamy, add cream of tartar to them, and beat until soft peaks form. Add sugar and beat until stiff. Fold half of whipped cream into egg whites, then into the orange mixture. Pile into the cooled pie crust and top with remaining whipped cream. Chill until firm and keep refrigerated.

This pie is just as good the second day as the first and provides a cool and refreshing finale for a delicious pork dinner. Or for any other hearty dinner for that matter. For an extra special touch at serving time, open a small can of Mandarin oranges and garnish each slice of pie with tiny orange sections. You don't have to be a Lovell to appreciate this dessert.

Bon appetit.