

caramelised apple pork shoulder



ingredients

1.5-2kg pork shoulder, bone-in or boneless
2 large apples (i used pink lady, but other varieties are fine), sliced into wedges
2 medium onions, sliced into wedges
4 garlic cloves, smashed
2 cinnamon sticks
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp smoked paprika
2 tbsp brown sugar (optional, but highly recommended, it adds caramel notes)
1 ½ cups apple cider (alcoholic or non-alcoholic, apple juice also works great)
½ cup apple cider vinegar
1 cup chicken or pork stock
3 tbsp olive oil
2 bay leaves
2 sprigs fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)
salt and cracked black pepper, to taste

method

1. pat pork shoulder dry and season generously with salt, pepper, smoked paprika, and ground cinnamon. heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a frying pan over medium-high. sear pork shoulder on all sides until browned (about 8 minutes total). remove and place into slow cooker.
2. add remaining olive oil to the pan. sauté onions and garlic until golden, about 5 minutes. stir in brown sugar (if using) and let it lightly caramelize. add apple wedges, cooking for 2–3 minutes until just starting to soften.
3. pour in apple cider vinegar, scraping up browned bits. add apple cider and stock and wam through.
4. transfer the liquid (including onions and apples) to the slow cooker. nestle cinnamon sticks, bay leaves, and thyme into the liquid.
5. place the lid on your slow cooker and cook on low for 10-12 hours or until the pork falls off the bone and pulls apart easily.
6. once cooked, remove pork from the pot and rest for 10 minutes before shredding.
7. skim excess fat from the braising liquid. simmer uncovered on the stovetop for 10 minutes to reduce into a glossy sauce.
8. serve pork with apples, onions, and spoonfuls of sauce over mashed potatoes, creamy polenta, or roasted root vegetables. an 'apple coleslaw' goes really nicely with this recipe too.

