

Choucroute Garnie

Category: Casserole

Servings: 6

Rating: 10

Source: Mostly Julia Child

Description:

Best served with a variety of mustards.

I would double this recipe for eight people and make it in two separate casseroles unless you have a very large casserole.

Ingredients:

isauerkraut	2 lbs (about 5 cups)
'bacon	1/2 lb. chunk
icarrots	1/2 cup, thinly sliced
iapple	1 tart varietyt, grated
ionion	1 cup, sliced
ibutter	2 Tbsp. butter, 2 Tbsp. oil
iparsley	4 sprigs
'bay leaf	1
ipeppercorns	6
'gin	1/4 cup or 10 juniper berries
ldry white wine	1 cup or 2/3 cup dry white vermouth
lowsodium chicken br	2 to 3 cups
isalt	
sausages	weisswurst, European wieners
ismoked pork chops	1/2 per person
ismoked pork hock	1 (optional but very good)

Instructions:

Drain sauerkraut and soak it in a large basin of cold water for about 15 minutes, changing the water twice. (You want the sauerkraut to have a some flavor but to have lost most of its "bite.") Drain it. Taking it by small handfuls, squeeze out as much water as you can. Pick it apart to separate the strands.

Remove the rind and slice the bacon into 1/2 inch pieces about 2 inches long. Simmer it in 2 quarts of water for 10 minutes. Drain.

Cook bacon, carrots and onions in butter and oil slowly in a covered (2 1/2 to 3 qt.) casserole for 10 minutes without browning. Stir in the sauerkraut and grated apple and when it is well covered with the fat and vegetables, cover and cook slowly for 10 minutes more.

Make a herb and spice packet of parsley, bay leaf, peppercorns (and juniper berries if using instead of gin), wrap it in cheesecloth and bury it in the dish. Pour in the wine (or vermouth), the gin, and enough stock just to cover the sauerkraut. Season lightly with salt and pepper. (I also like to add a good pinch of brown sugar.) Bring to a simmer on top of the stove. Lay on a round on buttered paper to fit the dish. Cover and set in middle of preheated oven (325) Regulate the heat so sauerkraut bubbles slowly for 4 1/2 to 5 hours, and until all the liquid has been absorbed by the sauerkraut. Taste for seasoning. If not served immediately, set aside uncovered.

After this dish bakes for several hours it has a lovely, mellow flavor. If you use a pork hock, cook it for the whole cooking then skin it and break it up. Other meats (pork chops and sausages) should be browned lightly, then buried in the sauerkraut for the last 1/2 hour or so. You can make the dish (before adding the browned meats) early in the day or the day before and it reheats well.