

Open-Faced Hot Pork Sandwiches

12 thin-cut, bone-in pork chops
4-6 cups beef stock
1 chopped onion
1 chopped carrot
1 chopped celery stalk
2 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary
2 teaspoons of fresh thyme leaves
1 bay leaf
¼ cup vegetable oil
⅓ cup flour
1 teaspoon Maggi seasoning sauce
Salt and pepper to taste

Dry the pork chops thoroughly with paper towels, so they will brown properly. In a heavy Dutch oven, brown the pork chops lightly on both sides a few at a time in the vegetable oil. Remove to a side dish. Lightly brown the chopped onion, carrot, and celery.

Return the pork chops to the pot and add enough beef stock to barely cover them. Bring to a simmer on top of the stove. Add in the rosemary, thyme, bay leaf, salt, and pepper. Cover the pot and place in a 300° degree oven. Braise for 2½ to 3 hours, until the pork chops seem very tender and the bones are beginning to fall off. During the braising, rearrange the chops occasionally so that some are always submerged in the broth. If the liquid evaporates too much, add extra stock. Remove from the oven.

Remove the chops from the braising liquid and when cool enough to handle carefully extract the bones from the meat, keeping the meat intact as much as possible. Be sure to get all the small bones out.

Strain the braising liquid through a sieve, into a saucepan, pressing down on the vegetables and herbs to extract as much flavor as possible. Discard the vegetables and herbs. Allow the braising liquid to cool, and skim off as much of the fat from liquid as possible, saving the fat.

You should have enough braising liquid to make more than 4 cups. In the saucepan reduce, the liquid to 4 cups to intensify the flavor. In the same Dutch oven, place the reserved pork fat. You need at least ¼ cup of pork fat. If you are short, add enough butter to equal that amount. In the meantime bring the braising liquid to the simmer.

Bring the pork fat and any added butter to a sizzle in the Dutch oven. Whisk in the flour and continue to cook, whisking constantly until the flour begins to turn a caramel brown. Pour on the simmering braising liquid and continue to whisk until smooth. Stir in the

Maggi seasoning to add a deeper color. If the gravy seems too thin, boil until it thickens; if too thick, thin it out with a little extra stock. Season well with salt and pepper.

To serve, cut 6 slices of bread diagonally and place on plates. Spoon a portion of mashed potatoes between the halved bread slices. Top slices of bread with a pork chop, plus any broken pieces of meat. Spoon a generous portion of gravy over the sandwiches and the mashed potatoes. Serves 6.