

FROM THE KITCHEN OF – OUR VERY OWN – ROB FRY

National Sales Manager and resident "foodie"!

FIG & PÂTÉ STUFFED PORK CHOPS

Pairs well with Pinot Noir...

especially Fiddlehead 2009 "Oldsville Reserve" Oregon Pinot Noir

INGREDIENTS (Serves 2)

- 1 tsp. fresh chopped shallots
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- Handful of ripe figs
- Red wine (for the pot AND the chef!)
- 1 orange or tangerine for zest (optional)
- Agave syrup or sugar (optional)
- Italian parsley, chopped
- 2 thick-cut, boneless pork chops
- 4 oz liver pâté
- Salt & pepper

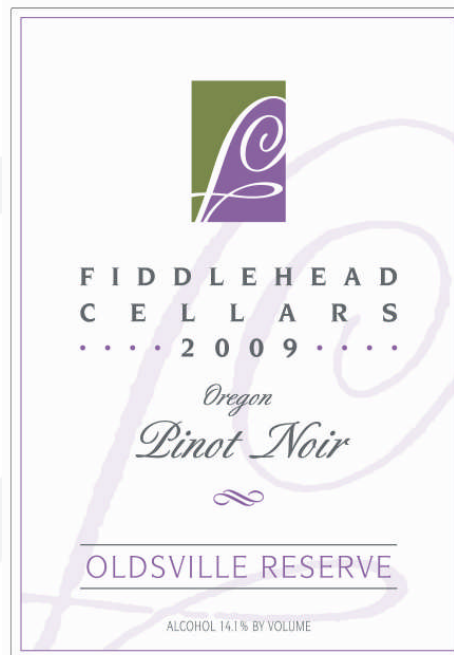
PREPARATION

1. Sauté chopped shallots in butter for 1-2 minutes.
2. Chop figs (reserving a couple for garnish, if available) and add to shallots. Stir and squish figs. While stirring, introduce small amounts of wine for consistency and add the optional zest for an aromatic lift! Check flavoring – the compote should have a mild sweetness. If needed, add a little agave syrup or other sweetener.
3. When fully integrated, stir in a handful of chopped parsley. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper as needed then allow compote cool.
4. Starting from the fat side, cut a deep pocket in the side of the pork chops with a sharp knife. Season the outside with salt & pepper.
5. Place one large teaspoon of fig compote in each pork chop and spread around to coat the inside.
6. Slice pâté and stuff inside each pork chop, leaving additional room for more compote on top. Add remainder of compote to each pork chop.
7. Place stuffed pork chops in a greased baking pan, stuffed end up. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes, until nicely browned on the edges. (Don't overcook! The finished pork should have a faint pink hue in the center.)
8. Remove from oven and let stand 10 minutes before serving.

I love to make wine-friendly food, and pork is such a perfect backdrop to pull together the flavors in Pinot noir. The inspiration for this dish came on Valentine's Day so the portions are for 2 people. I recommend serving this dish with sautéed red Swiss chard and wild rice.

The beauty of this dish is its simplicity! If you want to get really fancy, skin the figs before cooking so there will be no black in your sauce. Reserve ½ the compote in the pan, adding additional wine to make the sauce. Strain seeds and pulp, returning to pan. Adjust seasoning, reduce, then finish with a little butter for thickening (stirring in small pats as with a beurre blanc).

If you want to get even simpler – use a good prepared fig spread!



Bon Appétit! Rob Fry