Pork and Apple Cider Noodle Bake

One 8×12 in (20×30 cm) baking dish, at least 3 qt/2.8 L; 4 main-dish portions · Active 30 min · Total 1 hr 25 min

Ingredients

- 8 oz dry broad egg noodles (225 g)
- 10 cups water (2.4 L), for noodles
- 1 teaspoon neutral oil (5 ml)
- 1 lb ground pork (450 g)
- 1 tablespoon butter (15 g)
- 1 large leek, white and pale-green parts washed and finely sliced (150 g prepared)
- 2 firm eating apples, peeled, cored and cut in 1/2-in/1-cm dice (250 g prepared)
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour (18 g)
- 1 cup plain unsweetened nonalcoholic apple cider or cloudy apple juice (240 ml)
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken stock (120 ml)
- 1 tablespoon whole-grain mustard (15 g)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 cup sour cream (120 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Set out

Oven, 8×12 in (20×30 cm) baking dish, at least 3 qt/2.8 L, Large noodle saucepan, 12-in/30-cm deep skillet, Colander, Whisk, Rimmed baking sheet, Food thermometer, Suitable foil

Allergens

Wheat, Egg, Milk, Mustard; check stock for celery or other allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat oven to 375°F (190°C). Put the dish on a rimmed sheet and bring noodle water to a boil. Heat oil in the skillet over medium-high heat. Cook pork 8–10 minutes, breaking it up, until several places reach 160°F (71°C). Safely drain excess fat, leaving about 1 tablespoon.

2. Add butter, leek and apple. Cook over medium heat 7–9 minutes, stirring, until leek is soft and apple is nearly tender. Stir in flour for 1 minute.

3. Gradually stir in cider and stock. Add mustard, thyme, salt and pepper and simmer 5–7 minutes until sauce coats a spoon. Take off the heat and stir in sour cream.

4. Meanwhile cook noodles 2 minutes short of their packet time. Drain and fold into the warm filling. Spread in the dish and cover with suitable foil. Bake 15 minutes. Uncover and bake 10–15 minutes more until the center and several other spots reach 165°F (74°C).

5. Rest 5 minutes and divide into four portions.

Keep the apple dice small

A one-centimeter piece is easy to distribute through the pan. Large wedges would require a different softening stage and could leave one plate mostly apple and another mostly pork.

A useful detail

The 85-minute total includes washing the leek, preparing apples, the full skillet stage, overlapping noodle cooking, the bake and rest. Use nonalcoholic cider/cloudy juice as stated, not cider vinegar.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C), at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 2 days or an earlier pork or dairy deadline. Reheat to 165°F (74°C), adding a little water if noodles have thickened the sauce. Refrigeration is preferred to freezing the sour-cream filling and apple pieces.