

Maple-Glazed Pork Tenderloin

Serves 6

This recipe will work with either natural pork or enhanced pork (injected with a salty solution). If your tenderloins are smaller than 1¼ pounds, reduce the cooking time in step 3 (and use an instant-read thermometer for best results). If the tenderloins don't fit in the skillet initially, let their ends curve up the side of the pan; the meat will eventually shrink as it cooks. Make sure the tenderloins turn deep golden brown in step 2, or they will appear pale after glazing. Our preference is to use grade B maple syrup. (Don't be tempted to substitute imitation maple syrup—it will be too sweet.) Be sure to thoroughly pat off the cornstarch mixture in step 1, as any excess will leave gummy spots.

- ¾ cup maple syrup (see note)
- ¼ cup light or mild molasses
- 2 tablespoons bourbon or brandy
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch ground cloves
- Pinch cayenne pepper
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 2 (1¼- to 1½-pound) pork tenderloins, trimmed of fat and silver skin (see note)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon whole grain mustard

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 375 degrees. Stir ½ cup of the maple syrup, the molasses, bourbon, cinnamon, cloves, and cayenne together in a 2-cup liquid measure; set aside. Whisk the cornstarch, sugar, salt, and pepper in a small bowl until combined. Transfer the cornstarch mixture to a rimmed baking sheet. Pat the tenderloins dry with paper towels, then roll in the cornstarch mixture until evenly coated on all sides. Thoroughly pat off the excess cornstarch mixture.
2. Heat the oil in a 12-inch heavy-bottomed nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until just beginning to smoke. Reduce the heat to medium and place both tenderloins in the skillet, leaving at least 1 inch between them. Cook until well browned on all sides, 8 to 12 minutes. Transfer the tenderloins to a wire rack set in a rimmed baking sheet.
3. Pour the excess fat from the skillet and return to medium heat. Add the syrup mixture to the skillet, scraping up the browned bits with a wooden spoon, and cook until reduced to ½ cup, about 2 minutes. Transfer 2 tablespoons of the glaze to a small bowl and set aside. Using the remaining glaze, brush each tenderloin with approximately 1 tablespoon glaze. Roast until the thickest part of the tenderloin registers 130 degrees on an instant-read thermometer, 12 to 20 minutes. Brush each roast with another tablespoon of the glaze and continue to roast until the thickest part of the tenderloin registers 140 to 145 degrees on an instant-read thermometer, 2 to 4 minutes longer. Remove the tenderloins from the oven and brush each with the remaining glaze; let rest, uncovered, 10 minutes until the meat registers 150 degrees on an instant-read thermometer.
4. While the tenderloins rest, stir the remaining ¼ cup maple syrup and the mustard into the reserved 2 tablespoons glaze. Brush each tenderloin with 1 tablespoon mustard glaze. Transfer the meat to a carving board and slice into ¼-inch-thick pieces. Serve, passing the extra glaze at the table.

(Variations

Maple-Glazed Pork Tenderloin with Smoked Paprika and Ginger

Follow the recipe for Maple-Glazed Pork Tenderloin, substituting dry sherry for the bourbon and 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger and ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika for the cinnamon, cloves, and cayenne pepper. Omit the mustard in step 4.

Maple-Glazed Pork Tenderloin with Orange and Chipotle

Follow the recipe for Maple-Glazed Pork Tenderloin, substituting 2 tablespoons frozen orange juice concentrate for 2 tablespoons of the molasses. Omit the cinnamon, cloves, and cayenne pepper and add two teaspoons finely minced chipotle chile in adobo sauce plus 2 teaspoons adobo sauce to the maple syrup mixture in step 1. Omit the mustard in step 4.