

FOOD & DINING

Bring the Mediterranean into your kitchen

Fresh ingredients are the hallmark of a Mediterranean diet, which is one reason so many people have increasingly embraced this captivating cuisine in recent years. Rich in the use of fish, vegetables, fruit, cheese and olive oil, Mediterranean diets are both delicious and loaded with nutrition.

Perhaps most surprising about the Mediterranean diet is not the ingredients, but how differently those ingredients are used from country to country. Meals that are commonplace in Morocco might be nothing like those served in Spain, despite containing similar ingredients. That's great news to men and women who want to embrace the Mediterranean diet, which can provide the healthy variety of ingredients men and women are looking for.

Those who want a taste of Spanish tapas can try the following recipe for "Pork Tenderloin With Pears and Sweet Sherry" courtesy of Sophie Baimbridge's "Stylish Mediterranean in Minutes" (Kyle Books).

Pork Tenderloin With Pears and Sweet Sherry

Serves 4 as tapas or 2 as main course

- 1 pound pork tenderloin
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small red onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 pear, not too hard if possible
- Scant 1/2 cup sweet oloroso sherry
- Few tablespoons chicken broth (optional)
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Heat a ladled sauté pan to medium-hot. (The trick to pan-frying meat is the temperature of the pan. It should be hot enough to brown and seal the meat, but not so hot that you burn the bottom of the pan, as the sediment left adds a delicious flavor to the final sauce.)

Trim the tenderloin of any white sinew and cut into 1/2-inch slices. Add the oil to the pan and, when hot, add the pork. Cook the slices, browning on both sides. Remove when the meat is sealed and brown, but if the slices are thicker, reduce the heat a little to cook through.

Meanwhile, chop the onion and slice the garlic.

Remove the meat to a bowl and add the onion and garlic to the pan. Cover the pan with the lid and gently cook the onion, scraping all the tasty sediment left by the meat (add a dash of water to help remove it before it burns if the pan is too hot).

While the onion is cooking, peel the pear, quarter, core and cut into thin slices. Add the pear and continue to cook for another 5 minutes, covered. When the onion and pear are soft, return the meat to the pan, mixing into the onions and season with salt and pepper.

Increase the heat to medium-hot, add the sherry and cook at a brisk simmer for 2 minutes to amalgamate the flavors. If you like your meat with a bit more sauce, you can add a few tablespoons of chicken broth or even water when the sauce comes to a boil.

Set aside for a few minutes then serve as a tapas or main course.



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