

Schnitzel and Pancetta Sandwich with Sauerkraut

Funky Fridays: Crunch and funk go hand in hand here, with a crispy coating hiding a slip of prosciutto wrapped around the pork, then topped with a pile of pungent caraway-flecked sauerkraut on a pretzel or kaiser roll with a schmear of mustard. Austrians and Italians both say they were the first to pound tough meat cutlets, dredge and fry them, rendering them tender and edibly delicious. Variations abound, ranging from the original veal to chicken to even – *gasp!* – vegetarian attempts. The common denominator is the quest a juicy, tender bite inside a crunchy coating. This incarnation will make our ancestors proud.

Ingredients

sauerkraut

1 pound sauerkraut
1/2 teaspoon caraway seeds

schnitzel

6 thin-cut pork cutlets (1 to 1½ pounds)
6 thin slices pancetta
Kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper
1 cup all-purpose flour
3 large eggs
2 tablespoons milk
2 cups panko
1/4 cup olive oil
4 tablespoons unsalted butter

sandwich

6 pretzel rolls, or poppy seed kaiser rolls
Whole grain mustard, for spreading

Directions

for the sauerkraut

Empty the sauerkraut into a medium saucepan and stir in the caraway seeds. Keep warm over low heat.

for the schnitzel

Heat a large cast-iron skillet over medium heat until it's hot, about 10 minutes.

Pound each cutlet between plastic wrap until they are about 1/8-inch thick. Stick a piece of pancetta on one side (it will stick because both meats are moist). Sprinkle with a little salt and pepper on the other side.

Put the flour in a shallow dish. Whisk the eggs and milk in another shallow dish. Put the panko in a third shallow dish. Line them next to the stove top, with the panko closest to the skillet. Place a wire rack on a rimmed baking sheet and set on the other side of the skillet.

Once the skillet is hot, add the oil and heat until it shimmers, about 3 minutes. Melt the butter into the oil. Meanwhile, begin to dredge the cutlets, one at a time. Press a cutlet into the flour and pat off the excess, then dip it into the egg and let the excess drip off, and finally press into the panko. Slip 2 cutlets at a time into the hot oil and cook until golden brown on one side, about 5 minutes. Flip over and cook until the other side is golden brown, about 4 minutes. Remove to the wire rack. Repeat with the other 4 cutlets.

for the sandwich

Slice each roll in half. Spread as much mustard as you'd like on the bottom half. Cut each schnitzel in half and arrange on the roll. Top with about 1/3 cup of the sauerkraut.

total time: 35 minutes

active prep: 25 minutes of cooking, 10 minutes of prep

serves: 6

difficulty: medium