
Cooking Classes with Aki and Alex



Last weekend, we took a cooking class taught by Chefs Aki Kamozawa & H. Alexander Talbot of [Ideas in Food](#). This was a new thing - they just announced [their first round of classes](#) last month. We took their class on Pork and Apples, but you still have time to catch their Steak and Eggs class this Saturday, and their Scallops class on October 20th.

The Pork and Apples class was wildly freeform - Aki and Alex went apple-picking a few days before the class, and they ordered a small whole pig. The 5 students then worked with them to butcher the whole pig and cook a huge assortment of meals from its various bits. Aki and Alex are fantastic teachers, and they respond very well to questions and an excited exchange of ideas. We have long adored their blog and their cooking, so it was exciting to finally get into the kitchen along with them.

A list of what we made that day plus a photo of the butchered pig's head (consider yourself warned) after the jump.



During the class, we made:

Apple, Dill, Broccoli Rabe, and Bacon Salad - we compressed the salad in a high-pressure vacuum sealer to meld the flavors before serving.

Roast Half Pig - basted throughout cooking with bacon fat so it developed a fantastic crispy skin.

Applesauce - chunky, spicy, with orange oil.

Horseradish Cavatelli with Garlic-Studded Ham - using a handcranked cavatelli machine to shape the pasta.

Braised Pig's Head Stuffed with Bacon, Prunes, and Apples - cooked in a pressure cooker, this took about a quarter of the time it would have required in an oven.

Apple Cider Foam - made by blending apple cider with xantham gum (a hydrocolloid) and versa-whip (a type of soy protein), and then whipping it up into a light, airy foam.

Roast Pork Leg Stuffed with Ricotta, Mango, Apples, and Sausage - the creamy filling was wonderful, and the mango took on an almost squash-like texture and flavor.

Barbecued Pork with a Cilantro/Jalapeno/Pickled Ginger/&c marinade and sauce - we speeded up the marinade by vacuum sealing the meat and leaving it under pressure for a while before cutting it free and throwing it on the grill.

By [Danielle Sucher](#) in [Food](#), [Food](#) on October 9, 2007 2:33 PM