

## Menu

### Spiced Pecans

### Rosemary Pork with Crispy Prosciutto · Applesauce

### Rice Pilaf · Steamed Broccoli

### Pumpkin Spice Icebox Cake

## The Game Plan

The day before:

*(About 30 minutes hands on, plus simmering time for the applesauce, about 1 hour, total)*

- Make the applesauce.
- While the apples simmer for the sauce, assemble and chill the icebox cake.

Early in the day, at least 4 hours before dinner:

*(About 30 minutes hands on, plus cooking and cooling time for the pecans, about 1 hour, total)*

- Make the Spiced Pecans and let them cool to room temperature.
- While the pecans toast, prep the pork roast with the garlic-rosemary butter and prosciutto; chill.
- Clean up the kitchen, and if needed, run the dishwasher so it will be empty for the dinner dishes later.

2 hours before dinner, enjoy the Spiced Pecans with a glass of wine.

1 to 1½ hours before dinner:

*(15 minutes)*

- Heat the oven and put the pork in to roast. (The pork will take approximately 20 minutes per pound to roast, plus about 20 minutes for resting and carving, so work backward from serving time based on the size of your roast, and add 15 minutes for heating time for the oven.)
- While the oven heats, transfer the icebox cake from the pan to a platter, top it with whipped cream and crushed candy. Chill the cake until serving time.
- If you ran the dishwasher earlier, empty it now, and load in the dishes from the appetizer and from preparing the dessert.

30 minutes before dinner:

*(10 minutes)*

- Start the rice pilaf, using a packaged mix. (If you prefer to make rice from scratch, use your preferred recipe and adjust the timing accordingly.)
- Set the table.
- Open the dinner wine and pour a glass to let it breathe.

20 minutes before dinner:

*(20 minutes)*

- Take the pork roast out of the oven to rest; broil the prosciutto and then set it aside to crisp.
- Steam the broccoli.
- Light the candles.
- Start the dinner music.
- Pour the wine.
- Carve the pork.

After dinner:

*(10 minutes)*

- Clear the table. While your partner loads the dishwasher, cut and serve the icebox cake.

Notes:

- *The applesauce, icebox cake, the prep for the pork roast and the toasting of the spiced pecans all need to be done ahead but there is flexibility in how far ahead to do these steps. The day before, early in the day, or just enough ahead to get them done for your serving deadline, it's up to you. Consult the recipes for specifics; the timing I've suggested here is one schedule that will work well.*
- *We like to enjoy an appetizer about 2 hours before dinner. If you prefer to have the appetizer closer to dinner, adjust the timeline accordingly.*
- *The hands-on work time estimates (in parentheses below the start times) are for one person doing it all, but some of these tasks can be shared or delegated.*