

OVEN BAKED PORK CHOPS

Serves 2

Ingredients:

Stryker Farm thick cut pork chops (bone-in)
about 6 medium sized portobello mushrooms
3 TBSP butter
½ cup of dry white wine such as a Sauvignon Blanc
1 TBSP olive oil
salt and pepper

For the Brine:

3 cups water
3 TBSP sea salt
2 crushed garlic bulbs
1 TBSP black peppercorns
1 bay leaf

Pork chops can easily be overcooked. By using a two step method, on the stovetop and in the oven, it guarantees a juicy, perfectly done chop. This recipe is simple with minimal ingredients and loads of flavor. From start to finish it takes a just about an hour.

Instructions:

1. Place defrosted chops in a pan to brine for at least a half an hour and up to four hours. It's not necessary, but if you have the time it's well worth it. To make the brine, boil a cup of water and add the salt to dissolve. Add 2 more cups of cold water and the other spices. In a pinch, just the salt and water will do.
2. Meanwhile preheat the oven to 400° F. Place the cast iron pan in the oven to heat to temperature.
3. Slice the mushrooms in approximately ⅛ inch slices.
4. Melt some butter in another pan on medium low heat. Choose your pan wisely. It should be wide enough that the mushrooms have room to breathe. When the mushrooms are cooked on top of one another it results in steamed mushrooms, which will have a spongier (more undesirable) texture.
5. Let the mushrooms brown on one side. You can peek under a few to test. They should get a warm golden brown crust on them. Then you can use a spatula to scrape them up and cook the other side. Don't worry if they stick to the pan a little bit.
6. Patiently cook down the mushrooms until they stop releasing liquid and are sufficiently browned all over. Their volume should now take up a fraction of the pan. Turn the burner down low. (They

can remain on low heat while you finish the pork). As they near doneness pull out the brining chops.

7. Pat them completely dry, and rub both sides with olive oil, salt and pepper.
8. Using an oven mitt, remove the heated pan from the oven and place it on a medium high flame on the stove top.
9. Sear the chops on one side for 3 minutes on the stove top. The pan should be extremely hot and the chops will sizzle and smoke. Flip to the other side and put the pan back into the oven.
10. Bake for 6-10 minutes, until a meat thermometer reads 145° F.
11. Remove the chops from the pan and allow them to rest. Pour some white wine into the cast iron pan, and using a wooden spatula, scrape up the brown bits. Carefully add the meaty juices to the mushroom pan. Add a little more wine, salt and cracked black pepper, and let the wine cook off while the chops rest.
12. Plate the chops and top with mushrooms and pan juices. Garnish with chopped parsley.

I assure you, these chops will be divine. The fat should come right off the meat, and unless you're dining with the Queen herself, you should definitely clean the succulent meat off the bones as best as you can. As an afterthought, I added our salad greens to the empty mushroom pan to use the leftover juices as a dressing; waste not, want not. Sprinkled with Parmesan, it was a delicious post-pork salad.