

COOKING WITH KELLY

Lamb chops, quick and easy

KELLY HOUSEN | spark
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I like to consider myself a pretty decent cook, but for some reason, I've always been irrationally afraid of lamb. It's not that I don't like lamb. I do. A tender, juicy lamb chop can be the most satisfying dinner. But for some reason, I've always been afraid of attempting lamb in my own kitchen and ate it only if someone else prepared it for me.

But after watching Jason Barrowcliff, the executive chef at Domaine Hudson, prepare this dijon-crusting lamb chop, I'm confident that I can make a juicy, tender lamb chop at home.

If only I had known it was this easy before.

The key to a good finished product is to start with a good piece of meat. Jason said he always gets New Zealand lamb, because it is less fatty and more tender than domestic lamb. If you can't find New Zealand lamb at your grocery store, try Janssen's in Greenville, Jason said.

Jason started his lamb dish by heating an oven-safe pan over medium high heat. He added a blend of oil that's 90 percent vegetable oil and 10 percent olive oil. Jason blends his oil because olive oil has a low burning point, so it can't withstand the high heat. By using mostly vegetable and just a little bit of olive oil, you still get the flavor of the olive oil but the high burning point of vegetable oil.

While the oil was heating, he seasoned the lamb with salt and pepper, and let it sit for at least five minutes. This starts to draw the moisture out of the lamb, so it will sear better and the flavor will be more concentrated. Once the lamb was seared to an even golden brown, Jason coated it with dijon mustard and panko bread crumbs. The panko bread crumbs get a little bit crispier than regular bread crumbs, but if you only have regular bread crumbs, they'll work fine.

Place the lamb back into the pan and into the oven. When your lamb is done, let it sit about 10 or 15 minutes before you serve it. This will let the juices redistribute through the lamb, and make it even more tender.



CHEF JASON BARROWCLIFF

Jason has spent time in the kitchen at Harry's Savoy Grill, the Mendenhall Inn, the Dilworthtown Inn and the Wilmington Country Club. Now he's the executive chef at Domaine Hudson.

TIPS

- *These are small portions of lamb.* Serve them as part of a tapas menu, or serve two together for a main course.
- When you have to get rid of the oil from the pan you seared the lamb in, don't just dump it down the drain. That can build up and clog your drain. Instead, pour it into an empty can of some kind, let it cool, then throw it away.

DIJON CRUSTED LAMB

Ingredients

2 New Zealand lamb chops
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
2 tsp. bread crumbs
1 oz. vegetable oil (or 1 oz. mixture of vegetable and olive oil)



Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
Cut a rack of lamb down into small chops.
Place a small, oven-proof frying pan over medium heat, and add the oil.
When the oil is hazy, add the lamb and sear on both sides until it's golden brown. Remove the lamb from the pan, and discard the oil.
Coat the lamb with the mustard, then the bread crumbs, pressing the bread crumbs into the mustard.
Put the lamb back in the pan and place in the oven for about 12 minutes until medium rare. Remove from the oven and let it rest for about 10 to 15 minutes before serving.

MINT PEA SALAD

Ingredients

1 cup fresh shelled peas, blanched
4 ounces diced carrots, blanched
4 ounces diced potatoes, blanched
1/4 of a lemon, juiced
3 slices bacon, cooked and diced
1 garlic clove, minced
1 tsp. chopped mint
salt and pepper to taste

Directions

To blanch the vegetables, bring a pot of water to a boil. Add 1 tsp. salt, then blanch the peas, carrots and potatoes separately until they're al dente.
Remove them from the boiling water and put them in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process.
Mix all of the ingredients together in a medium bowl.
The salad can be served cold or hot.

[MORE, next page...]

CARAMELIZED ONION BROTH

Ingredients□□

- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil□
- 1 yellow onion, sliced□
- 1/2 cup dry white wine□
- 3 sprigs thyme□
- 1 bay leaf□
- 3 black peppercorns□
- 3 cups chicken stock□
- 1/4 stick unsalted butter□□

Directions□□

Place a large pan over medium heat and coat with oil.

When the oil looks hazy, add the onions. Saute the onions until they're golden.□

Add the wine and reduce until the liquid is almost evaporated.

Then add the thyme, bay leaf and peppercorns.□

Pour in the chicken stock and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat to low and cook until the volume is reduced by half.□

Strain the reduced liquid into a small saucepan, and whisk in the butter.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.