

Lamb Chops with Cognac Dijon Cream Sauce
AF DuPage Cooking Demonstration
Saturday, May 13, 2023 11:00 am
Presented by Chef Chris Thielman & Karen Thielman

Servings: 1 “Frenched or semi-Frenched” rack of lamb cut into 7 or 8 chops. Depending on the rack, the yield will be 2 portions of 4 chops per person.

Special Equipment needed: Boning knife or French knife, small bowl, pastry brush, large sauté pan, wire mesh sieve, serving bowl

Note: When purchasing the rack of lamb, ask the butcher for a “Frenched or semi-Frenched” trimmed rack. When a rack of lamb is “Frenched”, a large portion of the fat layer has been removed and about 1 to 2 inches of meat has been removed from each bone, forming a type of “handle”. A fully-Frenched rack will have more meat removed between each rib, while a semi-Frenched rack will retain more meat. For our demonstration, we used a semi-Frenched rack.

Ingredients:

8-each lamb chops (Frenched or semi-frenched)

1 Tablespoon olive oil

3 Tablespoon minced shallots

3 ounces Cognac

1 ½ cups heavy cream

2 Tablespoons Dijon mustard (Edmond Fallot brand recommended)

Salt and pepper to taste

½ teaspoon finely minced rosemary (used as a finishing garnish in the sauce)

2 Tablespoons minced chives (used as a finishing garnish in the sauce)

Pink peppercorns as a plate garnish (optional)

Marinade Ingredients:

1 Tablespoon finely minced fresh rosemary

2 Tablespoons olive oil

Fresh ground pepper to taste

Salt to taste

Method:

Preparing the rack of lamb: A Frenched or semi-Frenched rack will already have a large portion of fat removed and some of the meat between each bone will have been carved away. There is a natural curve to the rack, depending on whether it came from the left or right side of the lamb. Since the arc and spacing between each rib will vary, it's important to view and plan how you will slice the chops ahead of time, taking into account that you want to ensure roughly the same amount of meat per chop. (You don't want the final rib to have almost no meat attached.)

Use a boning knife or French knife to follow the edge of each bone. The cut near the end of the bone may require a bit of extra force. It sometimes helps to slightly wiggle the knife as it will help it find its way through the natural split in the bone.

Prepare the marinade by mixing the minced rosemary, olive oil, fresh ground pepper and salt in a small bowl.

Brush the chops very lightly with the marinade using a pastry brush.

In a large sauté pan add 1 Tablespoon olive oil. Turn the heat to high, and allow the pan to get very hot.

Add the chops to the pan, turn down the heat to medium and cook the chops on each side to desired doneness; 2 or 3 minutes per side for rare chops and up to 5 or 6 minutes per side for well-done chops. It may be necessary to stand the chops on end to fully cook the sides.

Remove the lamb chops. Set aside and keep warm.

Wipe most of the residual fat out of the pan with a paper towel, leaving about 1 Tablespoon to sauté the shallots. **Note: Make sure to wipe the sides of the pan with a clean paper towel to ensure that no fat has dripped on the exterior of the pan.**

Turn the heat down to medium and add the minced shallots to the pan. Stir until shallots are caramelized.

IMPORTANT: TURN OFF THE FLAME on a gas stove or TURN OFF THE HEAT on an electric stove before adding the Cognac to avoid a large uncontrolled fire in the pan.

Carefully add the Cognac and cook until it is mostly reduced and almost dry (au sec). The Cognac will evaporate very quickly.

Turn the flame or the heat back on and add the cream and Dijon mustard.

Continue cooking over medium high heat, stirring, until the sauce has reduced to a nappé (coat the back of a spoon) consistency.

Strain the sauce through a wire mesh sieve into a serving bowl. If any residual juice has seeped out of the lamb chops as they rested, stir that juice into the sauce.

Adjust the salt and pepper and add the minced chives and minced rosemary as a garnish.

You can serve the sauce on the side or spoon the sauce over the cooked chops if desired.

As an option, if spooning the sauce onto the chops, lightly sprinkle pink peppercorns onto the sauce for an additional layer of spice.

Chefs Notes:

* If you have leftover sauce, crusty bread would be an excellent choice to sop up the extra yumminess.

* When cooking meat to temperature, the softer the meat feels, the more rare it is. When you press on a well-done chop it will feel harder to the touch because the muscle fibers have lost more moisture content.

* The Cognac Dijon Cream Sauce would also pair well with pork chops or other cuts of meat.