



THE PORK CHOP:

Your Not-So-Secret Weapon for
Solving Dinnertime Dilemmas

POCKET GUIDE to PORK

VOLUME

#2

LOIN
PORK CHOPS

TENDERLOIN

ROASTS:
loin roast
rib roast (rack of pork)

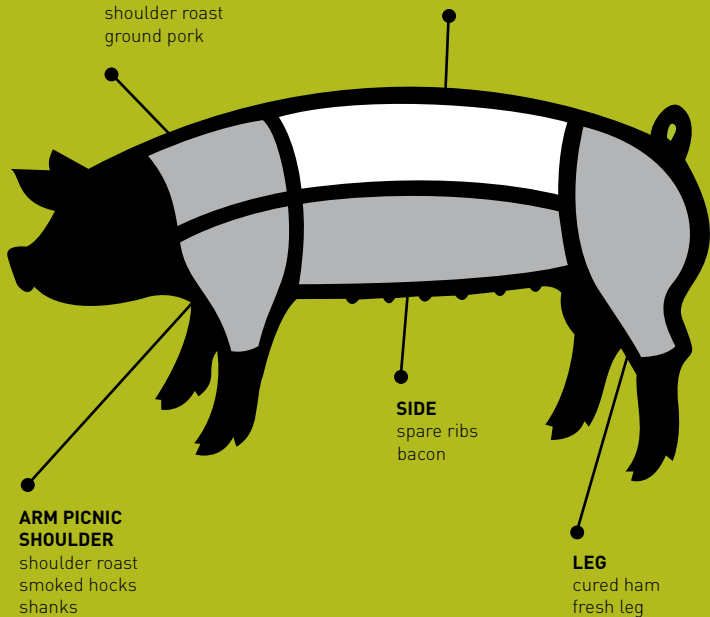
RIBS:
back ribs
country-style ribs

BLADE
BOSTON-STYLE
SHOULDER
shoulder roast
ground pork

SIDE
spare ribs
bacon

ARM PICNIC
SHOULDER
shoulder roast
smoked hocks
shanks

LEG
cured ham
fresh leg



It's time to bring back what you may think of as an "old" dinnertime staple – the pork chop. Perhaps you saw your mom spending hours (or even years!) trying to make her favorite chop recipe taste "just right." Did it scare you enough that you vowed never to try to make them for yourself, let alone feed them to your own family or dinner guests?

You need to confront your pork chop fears.

The chop is a beloved classic to many Americans, but some folks have been wary to cook it themselves – likely because most people (including you and those you love!) have suffered through dried-out, over-cooked chops in the past. That stops today.



With this easy-to-use guide you'll take the chop from mysterious to magical with a variety of ways to cut it, cook it, flavor it, top it and most of all enjoy it. Skeptics beware!

Overcooked meals and leather-like chops don't stand a chance here. Whether you're looking for mealtime survival tips or trusty dos and don'ts, we've got you covered with delicious pork chop recipes and foolproof steps.



As an additional backup, visit TheOtherWhiteMeat.com for even more recipes and pork guidance. Avert your mealtime crisis, think positively and start cooking!

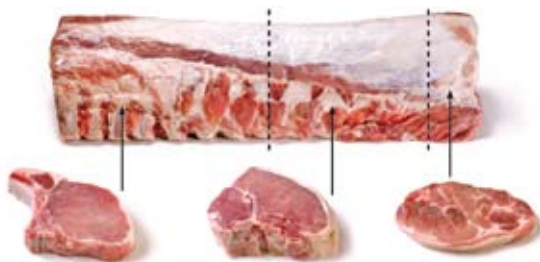


How to Prepare Flavorful Pork, Any Way You Chop It

The pork chop, a cut of the pork loin, is an old dinnertime staple that is often overcooked. Cooked correctly, pork chops really are a breeze to prepare. Whether you're a clueless cook or a savvy home chef, these basic tips will help you create a dish worth licking your chops for...not burning them! We'll ease you in by explaining the different types of chops—since we know you may already be confused by the fact that there are a great variety of chops to choose from—and highlight the lean nutritional value of the types of chops that come from the loin.

PORK CHOP CHEAT SHEET

WHOLE PORK LOIN As the most popular cut from the pork loin, chops offer cooking convenience and flavor options galore, whether the meal occasion is a quick dinner for two or a backyard gathering for 10. Shoppers may spot a variety of boneless and bone-in cuts in the meat case, including loin, rib and sirloin chops. Following is a guide to understanding some of the most common label language:



RIB CHOPS These chops originate in the center of the loin (in the rib area) and can be distinguished by the visible rib bone and large piece of loin meat. Rib chops are very flavorful and retain moisture nicely during cooking.

LOIN CHOPS Cut from the lower part of the loin (beneath the rib area), bone-in loin chops have a characteristic T-bone shape and include a portion of the leaner meat from the tenderloin. Boneless loin chops are also available, and these chops contain no tenderloin meat.

SIRLOIN CHOPS Sometimes sold bone-in, sirloin chops come from the end of the loin nearest the hip. This more marbled cut is ideal for marinating or brining.

Pork Chop Dos and Don'ts

DO CHOOSE YOUR CHOP Pork chops can be found under a variety of names, including loin, rib, sirloin, top loin and blade chops. Make sure you review the recipe you want to make before grocery shopping to know what variety of pork chop you need to purchase.

DO SIZE IT UP Believe it or not, all pork chops cook the same! The length of cooking primarily depends on the thickness of the chop, which can vary from ½ to 2 inches. Whether you choose chops boneless for convenience or chops with the bone attached for their attractive appearance, the cooking time is always just minutes per side. Check out the cooking basics chart (page 11).

DO CHECK THE TEMPERATURE Because pork chops can often be overcooked, checking the internal temperature often will help prevent dry chops. Cook chops until the internal temperature reaches 160° F. and is a little pink inside.

DO INFUSE FLAVOR You can make tasty chops without a recipe—just season them with a rub, sauce or marinade, like teriyaki or barbecue. Fruit toppings, salsas and chutneys are a great way to top off a chop too!

MUST-HAVES

Use the following items to cook chops in a variety of ways.

1. WOK / SKILLET



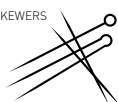
2. ROASTING PAN



3. BAKING SHEETS



4. SKEWERS



5. GRILL



DO SWITCH IT UP With so many ways to prepare this favorite—from grilling and baking to broiling and sautéing—a change in technique may be all you need to refresh your dish.

DO CHOP IT UP A great-tasting chop doesn't have to be the center of the plate. Chop, cube and slice your chops for a flavorful stir-fry, hearty salad or quick-and-easy kabobs.

DON'T GET INTIMIDATED Don't let cooking shows, your mother-in-law or that neighbor who always tries to one-up your dishes con you into believing chops are hard to make or that they have some special culinary skills you can't master. Just review this pocket guide and you'll be more than ready to fire up some chops!

DON'T GET STUCK IN A RUT Preparing pork chops is easy, so don't be afraid to try new recipes. This cut is so versatile you can marry it with so many flavors, fruits, sauces and spices to make time at the dinner table always enjoyable. Flip through this booklet and try these recipes first—they're simple and delicious.

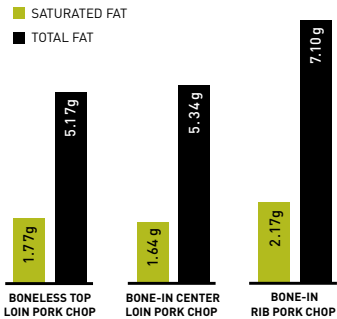
DON'T OVERCOOK YOUR CHOPS In case you missed it, avoid a dried-out dinner by cooking your chops to an internal temperature of 160° F., a little pink inside which means they're juicy and tender!

CHOPPING OFF THE FAT

Did you know that six common cuts of pork have, on average, 16% less fat and 27% less saturated fat than 17 years ago? Three popular chops made the *cut* and are classified as *lean* by the USDA.

LOIN = LEAN

When shopping, make sure to look for lean cuts of pork with the word "loin" on the label, such as a *loin* chop or pork tenderloin.

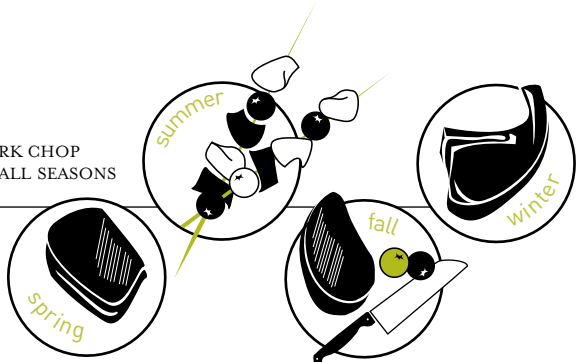


Chop! Chop! How to Make Meals in Minutes

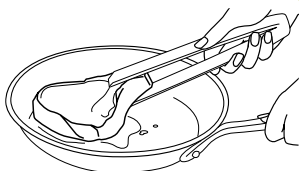
So others don't *bust your chops*, we'll start the menu off with a *so-easy-your-teenage-son-could-cook-it* recipe and work our way up. Each chop recipe has its own spunky seasonal flavor so we've got you covered year-round.

For example, **Autumn Glazed Pork Chops** provide the perfect fall flavor while **Mexican Mole Pork Chops** will defrost the kids after winter snowball fights. Wishing for a spring break getaway? Well who isn't—instead, sit back and relax with **Almond-Stuffed Pork Chops**. Then, once summer rolls around try an exotic dish like **Southwestern Kabobs**. And finally, perfect for everyday and special dinners in between seasons, whip up the **Spiced Peach Pork Chops**. We know you've got what it takes to become a chop master, so go ahead and get cookin'!

A PORK CHOP FOR ALL SEASONS



HOW TO BROWN A CHOP Add enough oil to skillet to cover the entire bottom; heat oil over medium-high heat. When oil is hot, add pork chops and let them brown on one side; flip them over with tongs (forks let juices escape) until both sides are well browned evenly. You don't need all day—only minutes per side!



Autumn Glazed Pork Chops



Autumn Glazed Pork Chops

COOKING DIRECTIONS

Spray a large nonstick skillet with nonstick coating. Heat over medium-high heat. Sprinkle both sides of chops with pepper. Brown chops on each side in hot skillet. Add apple cider. Cover tightly; cook over low heat for 5-6 minutes or until chops are just done. Drain off juices. In a small bowl combine cranberry sauce, honey, orange juice concentrate, ginger and nutmeg. Pour over chops. Cook for 1-2 minutes, until heated through. *Serves 4.*

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

These chops are an easy weekday dinner that highlights the autumn flavors.

NUTRITION FACTS

Calories: 230; Protein: 22 g; Fat: 6 g; Sodium: 41 mg; Fiber: 1 g; Cholesterol: 55 mg; Saturated Fat: 1 g; Carbohydrates: 27 g

INGREDIENTS

4 boneless pork chops, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup apple cider or juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole cranberry sauce

2 tablespoons honey

2 tablespoons frozen orange juice concentrate

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger

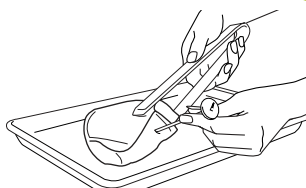
$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg

Storage Basics

One final tidbit as you lick the plate following that great pork chop dish you mastered, if there are any leftovers lingering, be sure to store them properly. Leftovers should be covered or wrapped and placed in the refrigerator within 1 to 2 hours of serving. Put them in the coldest part of the refrigerator for up to 4 or 5 days. If you are silly enough to not enjoy them by then, pitch the leftovers!

HOW TO USE A MEAT THERMOMETER

Simply insert a digital or instant-read thermometer into the thickest part of the pork chop without touching the bone. Be patient, the temperature should register within a few seconds. Remember, for a deliciously tender pork chop the final number should be 160° F.



Spiced Peach Pork Chops



Spiced Peach Pork Chops

COOKING DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl stir together paprika, flour, salt, cinnamon, allspice and cloves. Sprinkle on both sides of chops. In a large nonstick skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat; cook chops on both sides, turning once, for a total of about 7-8 minutes. In a small bowl stir mustard and peach slices together; add to skillet; cook and stir until heated through. *Serves 4.*

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

This spicy coating for pork chops marries well with the peaches. Consider this skillet dish for a comforting, down-home meal.

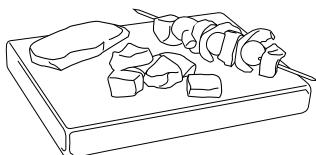
NUTRITION FACTS

Calories: 214; Protein: 21 g; Fat: 7 g; Sodium: 420 mg; Fiber: 0 g; Cholesterol: 60 mg; Saturated Fat: 2 g; Carbohydrates: 20 g

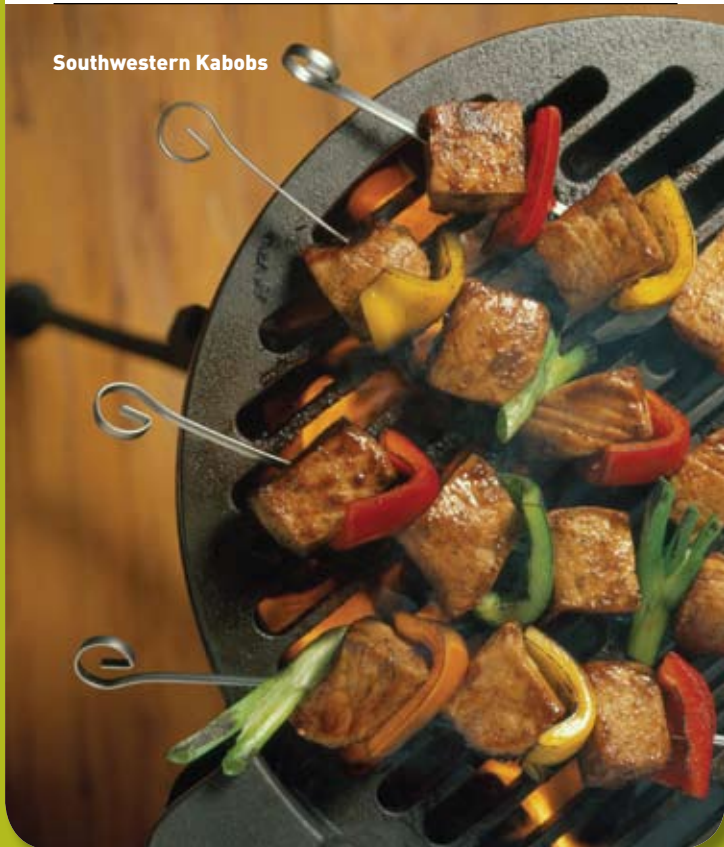
INGREDIENTS

- 4 boneless pork chops, ½-inch thick
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
- 1 16-ounce can sliced peaches in juice, drained

HOW TO CUBE A CHOP Insert a sharp knife into the boneless pork chop, cutting it into slices vertically and completely through the opposite side. Then cut the pork chop into slices going horizontally, like a checkerboard. Pork pieces should be in small cubes, making them a perfect fit for skewers, soups or sautéing.



Southwestern Kabobs



Southwestern Kabobs

COOKING DIRECTIONS

In a plastic bag or shallow bowl, toss together pork cubes with seasoning until pork is evenly coated. Thread pork cubes, alternating with pepper and onion pieces, onto skewers.* Grill over medium-hot fire, turning occasionally, until pork is nicely browned, about 10 minutes. *Serves 4.*

* If using wooden skewers, soak in water for 20 minutes before using.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

To make these kabobs more colorful, try a combination of red, yellow and green peppers. Serve with beans and rice.

NUTRITION FACTS

Calories: 170; Protein: 23 g; Fat: 6 g; Sodium: 280 mg; Fiber: 0 g; Cholesterol: 55 mg; Saturated Fat: 2 g; Carbohydrates: 5 g

INGREDIENTS

4 boneless pork chops, cut into 1-inch cubes

4 tablespoons taco seasoning

½ large onion, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces

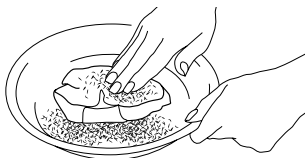
½ green bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1-inch pieces

Chops Cooking Basics

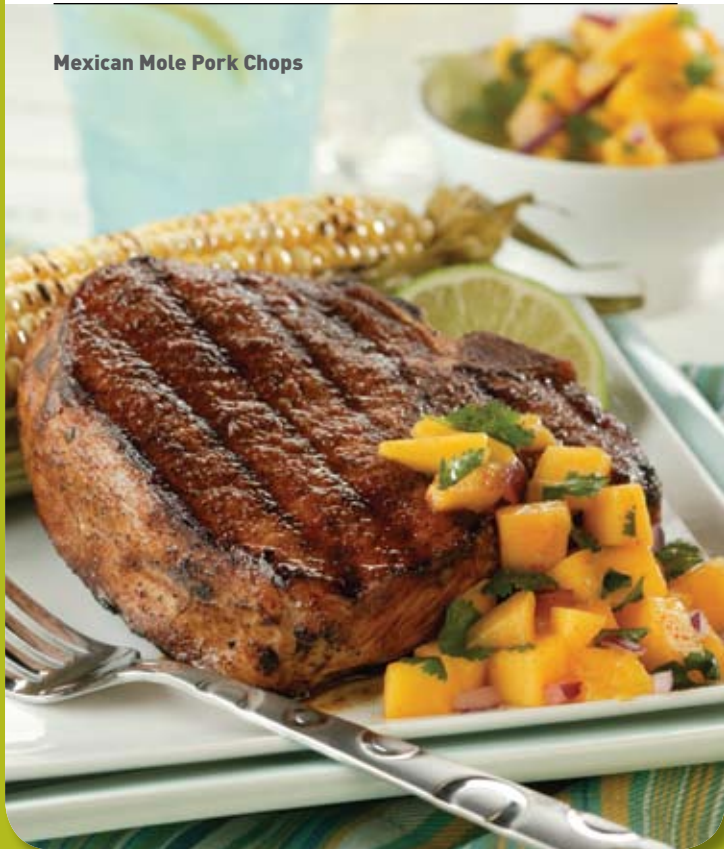
	APPROX. THICKNESS/WEIGHT	TOTAL COOKING TIME
ROASTING in an uncovered, shallow pan at 375° F.	¾-inch, bone-in or boneless	25 minutes
BROILING 4 in. from heat	¾-inch, bone-in or boneless	8-10 minutes
GRILLING over direct heat	1½ inches, thick chop 1-inch cubes	12-16 minutes 10-15 minutes
SAUTÉING with a small amount of oil over medium-high heat in an uncovered pan	¾-inch, bone-in or boneless	7-8 minutes
BRAISING with a small amount of liquid over low heat in a tightly covered pan	¼ - 1 inch	8-15 minutes

Pork should be cooked to 160° F., a temperature at which it will be slightly pink on the inside.

HOW TO APPLY A RUB No mystery here. Simply rub the spice mixture into the pork's surface, covering it as much as you desire. Trying to maintain perfectly manicured nails and avoid any mess? Just pour the dry spice mixture into a resealable bag, add pork and turn the bag to coat the chops evenly.



Mexican Mole Pork Chops



Mexican Mole Pork Chops

COOKING DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, combine dry rub ingredients; rub onto both sides of pork chops. Set aside for 30 minutes. Preheat grill to 400° to 450° F. When ready to cook, spray light coat of cooking spray on pork chops to keep them from sticking to the grill. Place on hot grill. Cover; cook for 7 minutes per side or until internal temperature reaches 160° F. using an instant-read thermometer. Let rest for 5 minutes. *Serves 4.*

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Serve with Mango Salsa; *see recipe below.*

NUTRITION FACTS

Calories: 248; Protein: 31 g; Fat: 9 g; Sodium: 213 mg; Fiber: 1 g; Cholesterol: 80 mg; Saturated Fat: 2 g; Carbohydrates: 15 g

Mango Salsa

INGREDIENTS

1 large mango, peeled, pitted and cubed
Juice of one fresh lime
1 tablespoon finely chopped red onion
1 - 2 teaspoons snipped fresh cilantro
¼ teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

Combine ingredients in a bowl. Serve with Mexican Mole Pork Chops. *Serves 4.*

INGREDIENTS

4 pork chops,
1½-inches thick,
bone-in

DRY RUB:
1 tablespoon
brown sugar

2 teaspoons
onion powder

1½ teaspoons cocoa

1 teaspoon
garlic powder

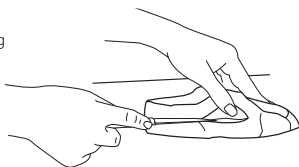
¼ teaspoon ground
chipotle pepper,
depending on
heat desired

⅛ teaspoon
ground paprika

Dash ground
cinnamon

Dash ground allspice

HOW TO STUFF A CHOP Insert a sharp paring or boning knife into the outer thick side of the chop, being careful not to cut completely through to the opposite side, creating a pocket. Now it's ready to be stuffed. Go ahead, scoop up your stuffing with a spoon and fill the pork pocket.



Almond-Stuffed Pork Chops



Almond-Stuffed Pork Chops

COOKING DIRECTIONS

For stuffing, melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Cook almonds, celery and onion in hot butter until vegetables are tender. Stir in the 2 tablespoons water, bouillon granules, parsley flakes and almond flavor. Add bread cubes; toss to moisten bread cubes. Cut opening in each chop from the outer side; widen opening into pocket, being careful not to cut through the other side of the chop. Fill pockets in chops with equal amounts of stuffing. Secure with toothpicks.

Heat oven to 375° F. Place stuffed chops on roasting rack in shallow roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, until internal temperature is 160° F. (check temperature in thickest part of meat), 35-45 minutes. Combine browning and seasoning sauce and 1 tablespoon water in a small bowl, if desired; brush over chops. Bake for 2 minutes more. Remove toothpicks from chops. *Serves 4.*

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Serve with a mixed green salad and sautéed green beans.

NUTRITION FACTS

Calories: 433; Protein: 39 g; Fat: 26 g; Sodium: 284 mg; Fiber: 1 g; Cholesterol: 117 mg; Saturated Fat: 9 g; Carbohydrates: 10 g

INGREDIENTS

- 4 boneless pork loin chops, 1¼-inches thick
- 1 tablespoon butter
- ¼ cup chopped almonds
- ¼ cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules
- ½ teaspoon dried parsley flakes
- ⅛ - ¼ teaspoon almond flavor
- 2 slices firm white bread, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 1 tablespoon browning and seasoning sauce (optional)
- 1 tablespoon water (optional)

The Pork Chop Glossary

"AMERICA'S CUT"—A boneless, center-cut top loin pork chop cut according to specific industry standards.

BLADE CHOP—Cut from the beginning of the loin in the shoulder area. Blade chops are usually thicker and more marbled.

BRAISING—A method of cooking pork by simmering it in liquid in a tightly covered pan over low heat. Braising is similar to stewing, but uses a smaller amount of liquid.

BROILING—A dry-heat method of cooking by placing pork on a preheated broiler pan so it is 3 to 5 inches from the heat source, and browning on both sides.

BUTTERFLY—A process of cutting boneless meat evenly to, but not through, the opposite edge, leaving the uncut edge as a "hinge." When the meat is open, it resembles the wings of a butterfly.

GRILLING—A method of cooking pork over direct heat on an electric, gas or charcoal grill.

MARINADE—A seasoned and/or acidic liquid used for marinating.

MARINATE—A process of soaking meat in a seasoned liquid to enhance its flavors.

PORK CHOPS—The most popular cut from the pork loin, which is the strip of meat that runs from the pig's hip to shoulder. Depending on where they originate, pork chops can be found under a variety of names, including loin, rib, sirloin, top loin and blade chops.

RIB CHOPS—Originate in the center of the loin in the rib area and include some back and rib bone.

RUB—A mixture of spices, herbs and sometimes salt that is used to season pork.

SAUTÉING—A method of preparing pork by cooking it over direct heat in a small amount of oil.

SIRLOIN CHOPS—Come from around the hip and often include part of the hip bone.

TOP LOIN CHOPS—They are located above the loin chops, toward the head. They are T-bone chops that contain no tenderloin.

Blue Cheese Stuffing

Stir together all ingredients. Makes enough stuffing for 6-8 pork chops or 4 double-pocket chops. Two tablespoons equals one serving.

INGREDIENTS

½ cup crumbled blue cheese
½ cup walnuts, coarsely chopped
⅛ teaspoon black pepper



Caribbean Rub

In a small bowl, stir together the spices. Rub spice mixture evenly over pork, coating the entire surface. Cook pork as desired, or cover and refrigerate for 15 minutes to several hours to boost flavors.

INGREDIENTS

1 teaspoon sugar	½ teaspoon ground allspice
1 teaspoon dried minced onion	½ teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon salt	1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, crushed
½ - ¾ teaspoon crushed red pepper	
½ teaspoon ground ginger	

Herbed Lemon-Garlic Marinade

Stir together all ingredients. Marinate pork 2-24 hours in refrigerator. Discard any leftover marinade. Makes enough for 4-6 pork chops.

INGREDIENTS

3 tablespoons olive oil	2 garlic cloves, minced
3 tablespoons lemon juice	2 teaspoons dried thyme
3 tablespoons water	2 teaspoons rosemary
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel	2 teaspoons sage savory
	2 teaspoons marjoram
	Salt and pepper, to taste

NATIONAL PORK BOARD
P.O. Box 9114
Des Moines, IA 50306



Don't be blah.®

For more pork cooking survival tips and recipes
you can fix for dinner tonight, get cooking
and clicking at www.TheOtherWhiteMeat.com.



©2008 National Pork Board, Des Moines, IA USA
This message funded by America's Pork Checkoff program.
01136-8/08