

HERB CRUSTED LAMB OR PORK



Crust Ingredients:

1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
2 t chopped fresh thyme
2 t chopped fresh rosemary
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 1/2 cups coarse fresh bread crumbs
1/2 cup finely grated fresh parmesan cheese
2 t grated lemon zest
1 t kosher salt
1/4 t freshly ground black pepper
About 1/4 cup olive oil

Lamb or Pork Ingredients:

2 8-rib racks of lamb or 6 bone-in boneless pork chops, not too thin and as well-marbled as you can find salt and pepper to taste
1 t vegetable oil, more if needed
2 t Dijon mustard
White wine, canned chicken broth or water

Crust Directions: Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In a small bowl, mix together dry ingredients then add some of the oil to moisten, adding more as needed to make a stuffing-like consistency that holds together.

Meat Directions: Season all sides of the lamb or pork generously with salt and pepper. Add the oil to a heavy skillet and heat until very hot. Sear the racks or chops until nicely browned on all sides about 5 minutes a side.

Put the meat in a shallow roasting pan or baking dish. The rack should be fat side up and the chops need some room between them. Paint the fat side of the rack or whichever side of the pork chops is up with the mustard. Pat and press the herb crust onto the mustard coating.

Roast to desired doneness. For the rack, medium rare will be when the internal temperature reaches 125 degrees on a meat thermometer which should take about 25 minutes. For the chops, it depends on thickness.

While you need to thoroughly cook pork, please don't overcook or you will really have dry chops. Roast them just until they've lost their pink color in the center (you can cut into one to check) and they register 155 degrees on a meat thermometer, 8 to 12 minutes, depending on thickness and how long they were seared.

Let either meat rest before serving so the juices can redistribute and the texture improve; the rack can with 10 to 15 minutes, while the chops need about 5.

If the roasting pan seems to have nice brown drippings in it, pour off any obvious grease, place on a burner. (be sure it's flame-proof), add a little white wine, canned chicken broth or water and deglaze the pan, scraping and dissolving the drippings and then boiling the liquid until it's intensely flavored. Serve with the meat.