

Lamb Chops with Garlic Potatoes, Mushrooms, and Snap Peas

Serves 2

This meal can be prepared in less than 45 minutes, assuming that the lamb chops are already defrosted. It takes a little bit of practice to get everything to finish cooking exactly at the same time, but the potatoes and mushrooms don't take much attention, and can be left on low heat for a considerable time while you finish off the chops and peas. I suggest the following game plan:

- 1) Microwave the potatoes.
- 2) Prepare the chops and put them in the refrigerator.
- 3) Start the potatoes and mushrooms cooking.
- 4) Prepare the peas and boil the water for them.
- 5) Start the lamb chops cooking when the potatoes are about ½ way cooked (10-15 min)
- 6) Start the peas when the lamb chops are turned.
- 7) Assemble on plates as soon as the chops are cooked.

Note that I have included a simple dish of snap peas as an accompaniment, but really any bright colored vegetable will work as well, though the cooking times will vary, of course.

Lamb Chops

4 lamb chops about 1-1/2" thick
2 Tbs olive oil
Ground black pepper
Coarse salt

- 1) With a sharp knife trim the chops of any extra fat, leaving 1/8" or less on the outside.
- 2) Put the chops on a large plate, and season both sides with ground pepper and salt. If coarse salt is not available, go ahead and use plain table salt, but very sparingly.
- 3) Put the chops in the refrigerator for 15 minutes or more while preparing the rest of the meal.

- 4) Put the olive oil in a large heavy frying pan and heat it on medium-high heat until the oil becomes very liquid and any excess drains quickly to the side of the pan when it is tilted (about 2 minutes).
- 5) Place the chops in the pan with as much space between them as possible. They should start to sizzle immediately if the pan is hot enough. Cook without turning, about 4 minutes. If your chops are thinner than 1-1/2 inches, reduce the cooking time to 3 minutes. If the oil starts to smoke, remove the pan from the heat for a short while and turn the heat down before continuing.
- 6) Flip the chops and cook on the other side for 4 minutes (3 minutes for thinner chops). Check for appropriate doneness. They should be quite rare at this point, but this will vary depending on the pan and on the stove settings. Continue cooking evenly on

both sides as needed. On my stove it takes another 3 minutes on each side to reach medium rare. Serve immediately.

Garlic Potatoes

2 medium potatoes (about ½ pound each)

4 Tbs olive oil

2 cloves garlic

½ cup chopped fresh parsley

½ tsp salt (additional to taste)

- 1) Microwave the potatoes on high for 5-6 minutes. This works for russet potatoes in my microwave. Your cooking time will vary, but when done, the skins should be loose and somewhat moist, and very hot.
- 2) Using a tea towel or paper napkin to hold the potatoes, peel off the skin with a small knife. Note that it is possible to peel the potatoes before cooking in the microwave, but they tend to dry out very easily.
- 3) Cut the peeled potatoes into small (1/2" or ¾") cubes.
- 4) Place the oil in a 8-10" non-stick frying pan and heat on medium or high heat until the oil coats the entire bottom of the pan and moves quickly from side to side when the pan is tipped (1-2 minutes)
- 5) Spread the potatoes evenly in the pan (they should form more or less a single layer) and cook for about 5 minutes. Shake the pan gently a few times to keep the potatoes from sticking to the bottom of the pan.
- 6) When you see the first browning starting on the potatoes, sprinkle salt over the potatoes and, using a spatula, loosen them from the bottom and turn them. Continue cooking and tossing every 4-5 minutes until the potatoes are a nice golden brown color (about 15 minutes total cooking time). Once the potatoes are nicely browned, you can, if necessary, turn the heat to low and keep them cooking very slowly for up to ½ an hour while you work on the rest of the meal. Just stir them occasionally to ensure that they cook evenly.
- 7) Peel and crush the garlic and chop it fine with a large wide knife. Chop the parsley fine also and set both the garlic and parsley aside.
- 8) Just before serving, add the garlic and parsley to the potatoes and continue to cook the mixture for 1-2 minutes on high heat stirring frequently.
- 9) Add salt to taste and serve immediately.

Sautéed Mushrooms and Onions

8oz fresh white mushrooms

¼ of a small onion, chopped very fine (about 3 Tbs)

4 Tbs olive oil

1 Tbs butter

1/3 cup good beef or lamb stock

(Campbell's Beef Consommé is an acceptable substitute)

- 1) Wash and slice the mushrooms about ¼" thick. Peel and chop the onion.

- 2) Heat the oil and butter in a frying pan on medium high heat until the butter foams. Stir to mix the oil and butter a bit.
- 3) Add the mushrooms and onions and stir to coat them all. Leave them evenly distributed on the bottom of the pan and allow them to cook undisturbed for 7-10 minutes or until the mushrooms start to turn brown on the bottoms. Stir once and continue cooking for another 7-10 minutes until most of the mushrooms are nicely browned.
- 4) If you are using Campbell's Beef Consommé, use $\frac{1}{4}$ cup and add a little water to make $\frac{1}{3}$ cup liquid, as the canned stock tends to be a bit salty.
- 5) Add the beef or lamb stock to the pan and stir to mix the stock and mushrooms.
- 6) Turn the heat down to low and continue to simmer until only a little liquid remains. If the mushrooms get a bit dry, add a tiny bit of water to the mix and stir to revive it. It can simmer on the stove for up to an hour in this way, if necessary. Spoon the mixture over the lamb chops, or serve separately, as desired.

Snap Peas

$\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ pound snap peas

1 quart water

1 tsp salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp olive oil

- 1) Pull the strings from the back of the pea pods (if they have strings) and discard them.
- 2) Bring water and salt to boil in a medium saucepan.
- 3) Put the peas in the boiling water for 5 minutes or until slightly tender
- 4) Drain and return to the pot. Toss with a little olive oil, and serve immediately.