

Xanadu Pork Chops

By Eric N. Valor - 2016

(created in a dream. seriously.)

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure-dome decree:

Where Alph, the sacred river, ran

Through caverns measureless to man

Down to a sunless sea." - "Kubla Khan" Samuel Taylor Coleridge 1816

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEuOoMprDgg>

- 2 medium pork chops, bone-on (or pork blade steak)
- 1 good sized green apple
- 2-3 apricots (depending on size)
- 1 lemon
- sliced pickled beets
- strip pickled carrots
- baby spinach
- dry tarragon
- dry sage
- sea salt
- black pepper
- powdered clove
- brown sugar
- unsalted butter

Make a brine solution using 1/4 cup sea salt per quart of water. Make enough to cover chops (about 2-4 quarts) in a glass baking tray or other suitable container. Let chops soak in a refrigerator for 2 hours (overnight or while away at work would be ideal). This will make the meat very tender and juicy.

In a bowl, mix 1 tablespoon tarragon, 1 tablespoon sage, 1 teaspoon of black pepper, and 1/2 to 1/4 teaspoon of salt (adjust for diet). Use this to rub into meat, including the bone, rubbing firmly to penetrate. Once chops are thoroughly coated, place on grill on indirect medium heat, bones toward fire. Using a brush, dab the top of each chop lightly with melted butter mixed with 1/2 teaspoon of the rub mixture, just to moisten. Cover grill and let cook for 5 minutes. Then flip each, again bone toward fire, and repeat the process. After the second side has cooked for 5 minutes, check for an internal temperature of 145 degrees (63 Celsius). Once reached, take each chop and dab with butter mixture then place over direct heat, butter-dabbed side down, to do a reverse sear. Sear about 1-2 minutes, enough to get lovely grill stripes. Dab the top with butter again, flip, let sear. Once cooked and seared, take off grill, wrap gently in foil, and let rest at least 15 minutes.

Quarter apple and apricots, removing pits and seed core. Make a thin slice of apple and apricot for each chop and set aside. Chop the remaining fruit into about 1/4 inch (0.5cm) chunks and sautee in your choice of butter (recommended) or extra-virgin olive oil. Sprinkle a pinch of salt over the fruit, then add 1/2 teaspoon clove. Squeeze in the juice of 1/2 lemon. Sautee until fruit is quite soft. Add 1/4 teaspoon brown sugar and thoroughly mix then remove from heat.

Take chops and plate over bed of steam-wilted baby spinach. Spoon fruit liberally over chops. Place one apple and one apricot slice from the saved slices on top. Next to chops place 6 slices rinsed pickled beets (with a flat edge sliced into each so they stand up) and 5 strips rinsed pickled carrots, arranged beet-carrot-beet with carrots vertical to look like stalks or spikes. Sprinkle edge of plates with dill, serve.