

COOKING FOR ONE: PORK CHOPS

Serves about 20.

By Dennis W. Viau; an original idea.

By doing some advance preparation, you can store single servings of pork that will go from freezer to skillet and cook in about 10 minutes. This is more of a procedure than a recipe. Although I say it serves about 20, that will depend on the size of pork loin and the room you have in your freezer.



Ingredients:

1 pork loin, 3 to 3½ pounds (1.4 to 1.6 kg)

About 20 thin slices of prosciutto

A collection of fresh herbs

Directions:

If desired, trim the loin of excess fat, if present. Slice into chops about half an inch (1.5cm) thick.

Place a slice of prosciutto on your work surface. Arrange several leaves of fresh herbs, depending on the size of the leaves and flavor of the herbs, on the center section of the slice. Then place a chop on top of the herbs. Enclose the chop in the prosciutto. (If preferred, you can season each chop with salt and pepper before encasing it in the prosciutto, but I find the prosciutto adds enough flavor to make seasoning unnecessary.)

Either wrap each chop in plastic film and place, a few at a time, in a freezer ziplock bag or heat seal the chops individually in plastic pouches using a vacuum sealer. Store in the freezer.

To cook: Remove a frozen chop from the plastic and place in a heated, lightly oiled skillet. Cook over medium low heat, covered, about 4 to 5 minutes. Turn the chop over and cook an additional few minutes until done to your liking, 2 to 5 minutes longer.

If you have a good meat thermometer, cook the chop until the internal temperature is between 130°F (54°F) for medium rare and 165°(71°C) for well done. If you do not buy pork from a reliable source, it is safer to cook the meat thoroughly to avoid illness.

Serve with your favorite vegetable(s).

Note: The reason to cut thin slices of pork loin is to allow the frozen chop to cook properly. If you prefer thick pork chops, do the procedure above, but thaw each chop before cooking it.