

# Pork Chops w Crispy Garlic & Capers

Serves 4-6 : ~40 minutes : recipe by Andy Baraghani

## Ingredients:

- 1 tsp granulated sugar
- 4 (1½-inch-thick) bone-in pork chops
- kosher salt
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus ⅓ cup divided
- ¼ cup capers, drained & rinsed
- 4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped parsley
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar (I used rice wine vinegar when pairing with the nori rice & cucumber salad)

## Instructions:

- Sprinkle the sugar evenly over the chops, then season them all over with salt.
- Let the chops hang out for 20 minutes at room temperature, or chill in the fridge, uncovered, for up to 24 hours.
- Place a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat.
- Rub the chops with the 2 tablespoons olive oil, making sure they are completely coated. This ensures the pork chops will brown while minimizing the smoke that'll come from the skillet.
- Place the pork chops in the skillet & sear them (it helps to use tongs to press down on the meat, so it makes direct contact with the surface of the hot pan, & cook) without moving the meat around, until golden brown in spots, 2 minutes.
- Flip the chops & continue to sear, pressing down, so the other side becomes similarly golden brown, another 2 minutes.
- Keep flipping & cooking the chops for 1 minute per side, until they have taken on a deep golden brown & caramelized color. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center of the thickest chop should read somewhere between 130°-135°F, 6 to 8 minutes, depending on the thickness of the chops.
- Turn the pork chops upright & sear all along the fat cap until crisp, about 1 minute.

- Transfer the pork chops to a cutting board & let rest for 10 minutes while you make the sauce.
  - Carefully wipe out the skillet.
  - Pour the remaining  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup olive oil into the skillet & place it over medium heat.
  - Add the capers & cook, swirling the pan often, until some of the capers begin to look like they're about to bud like a flower, 2 to 3 minutes.
  - Add the garlic & continue cooking until pale golden & the capers have crisped up, about 2 minutes more.
  - Transfer the crispy bits & hot oil to a medium bowl & stir in the red pepper flakes.
  - Then stir in the parsley & vinegar.
  - Taste the sauce. The capers will have added their brininess, but you'll likely need another pinch of salt (I added soy sauce instead of salt to pair with the nori rice & cucumber salad).
  - Cut the meat away from the bone, then slice it against the grain into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick pieces.
  - Transfer the meat to a plate, spoon on the crispy caper garlic sauce, & serve.
- 

**Recipe notes:**

- I think this was another opportunity for me to learn temperature control. I let my skillet get too hot & basically burnt the exterior of the pork chop in the first two minutes. It was still yummy & not overcooked but it definitely “browned” quicker than expected.

**What you learn from this recipe:**

- I learned that the way to brown a pork chop without overcooking it is to add a coating of sugar & to flip regularly. So it cooks quickly, browns quickly, & is never on the pan for too long.