

Let's Get Grilling

words by Mallorie Boggs

Summer is my favorite time of the year. My love for it isn't attributed to the warm weather but more so the food that the weather brings out.

For some, grilling is our go-to. It's easy to fire up and takes little time to make a piece of meat or a vegetable just right. Not to mention the easy cleanup of a grill (as my pastor would say, that's a good place for an "amen"). Here are some tips for grilling pork:

PORK CHOPS

When selecting your chops to grill, the thickness and type play a role in how it will cook. The presence of the bone is a personal choice, but it is one that will make a difference in the finished plate. A bone-in pork chop will give an even cook as the bone ensures a consistent thickness across the top. Speaking of thickness, the height of the pork chop depicts the time needed on the grill. Pork chops that are one to two inches thick will retain moisture better as they require a slower cook coming off more tender.

Marinades are an easy, tasty way to enhance the natural flavor of Berkshire pork. The night before your planning to put them on the grill, put an easy marinade or brine over the chops and refrigerate until it's go time.

PORK TENDERLOIN

Contrary to our friend the pork loin, tenderloins are great on the grill. With a nice rub and some heat management, you'll be enjoying this dinner in no time. First, use a rub of your choice thoroughly on the tenderloin. This can be done a few minutes before, but we suggest the night before for maximum flavor. Next, heat your grill so that the internal temperature is 450 - 500 degrees. Don't use the external thermometer on your grill hood. For accuracy, we recommend making the small investment in a grill surface thermometer.

Once your grill reaches the ideal temperature, keep 1/2 of your burners on low heat and 1/2 on medium-high. If you're using a charcoal grill or a grill-smoker combination, manage that internal grill temperature in the 450 - 500-degree range. Rotate the tenderloin every five minutes for even cooking. Tenderloins taste the best when cooked to an internal temperature of 145 degrees with a three-minute rest.

QUICK + EASY MARINADES

- 1**
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
 - 2 tbsp water
 - 2 tbsp brown sugar
 - 2 tbsp mild chili sauce
 - 2 garlic cloves (minced)
 - 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
 - 1 pinch salt

- 2**
- 1/2 cup olive oil
 - 1/4 cup lemon juice
 - 1 tbsp garlic minced
 - 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
 - 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
 - 1/3 cup brown sugar
 - 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
 - 2 tsp coarse salt
 - 1 tsp black pepper

- 3**
- 1 cup vegetable oil
 - 1/2 cup ketchup
 - 2 clove of garlic
 - 4 tbsp apple cider vinegar
 - 4 tbsp brown sugar
 - 4 tbsp soy sauce

SAUSAGES AND BRATWURSTS

Slow and easy does it. If you're grilling links, the goal is to keep all of the juices inside. Berkshire pork has a higher natural fat content than other pork options. If the sausage or bratwurst is grilled over too high of heat, the fat renders at a faster rate causing the juices to expand the casings and leak. If you grill sausages and bratwursts over high heat, you're going to lose flavor.

To prevent a bratwurst blowout, simmer your sausages in a liquid. Beer, wine, stock, or simply water will slowly bring the temperature of the pork up and steadily render the fat. Now, if you're like me and hate doing the dishes, feel free to break out the cast iron skillet and simmer over the grill. Once the simmer is done, sear your links on the grill to finish.

So now let's get out those grills and gather around for the great smell of Berkshire pork. •

Have a favorite grill recipe that you'd like to share?

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