

LitJay's Grilled Italian Pork Chops  
(difficult, but always a crowd pleaser!)

6-8 boneless Pork Loin Chops 1/2" to 3/4" thick  
Extra Virgin Olive Oil  
2 tbsp parsley  
1/2 tsp ground red pepper  
1 tsp ground black pepper  
2 tsp marjoram  
2 tsp thyme  
2 tsp rosemary  
2 tsp oregano  
2 tsp basil  
1 tbsp savory  
1 tsp garlic salt  
1 tsp garlic powder  
1 tbsp onion powder

Pour olive oil into a large cookie sheet until it is just under 1/8" deep. Sprinkle all of the seasonings into the oil evenly (change the portions to suit your own taste if you like) and mix thoroughly with the bottom of a fork. Set aside for the seasonings to blend.

Poke holes in both sides of each pork chop with a fork. Each "poke" should be about 1/4" to 1/2" apart. Lay pork chops on the cookie sheet and shift them each around a little to coat them with the oil and seasonings. Turn over each chop and repeat. Let them sit for about 5 minutes to absorb the oil and seasonings. Poke each chop again with the fork, turn, poke, shift, turn, and let them sit again. Repeat this whole affair as many times as you can stand to. Each repetition tenderizes and seasons the chops a little bit more. My main limitation on how many times I do this is how hungry my guests are when they are waiting for dinner. Each chop should be very drenched in oil and stained by the seasonings when you are done.

*The secret to getting these right is the temperature of your grill and properly utilizing the resultant "olive oil fire," so read this next part carefully! Using a Foreman grill simply won't work right, so this recipe is best used when the weather is tolerable enough to use your outside grill (woe is you if you don't have one!).*

Heat an OUTDOOR grill to the hottest temperature you can manage. To gauge this, hold a flat palm 1" above the grill. If you can tolerate the heat for 1 second or more, the fire is not hot enough yet. Transfer the chops to a large plate and pour the oil/seasonings from the pan to a bowl. Once the grill is hot enough, lower the fire and quickly (and CAREFULLY) throw the chops onto the grill. If they are properly drenched in oil, you will quickly get a large, hot fire underneath each chop from the oil that ran through the grill into the coals/burner. Let the meat sear in the fire for about 10 or 20 seconds and then turn them with a tongs to sear the other side.

*IMPORTANT: NEVER, EVER use a fork to turn meat during or after searing! Only use long, dull, spring-loaded tongs and turn the meat gingerly. Sharp tongs or a fork will poke a hole in the seared "layer" and allow tasty juices and absorbed seasonings to escape, drying out the meat and reducing flavor.*

Turn the chops continuously every 10 to 20 seconds until the “olive oil fires” have died and the grill has cooled to a “5 count” (an open palm 1” above the grill can be held there about 5 seconds before your hand starts to cook). Leave the chops on the grill for 4 to 5 minutes, baste lightly with the oil/seasonings gleaned from the pan, and quickly turn them. Be moderate about the amount used when basting or you will have huge fires again and the chops will get burned or dried out. Baste lightly again after turning and leave them for another 4 to 5 minutes. Baste and turn one more time if desired, one minute on the fire for each side after basting to kill bacteria living in the oil from the raw meat. Use ¼ cup of the oil/seasonings in place of fat and butter to make [gravy](#) for the chops if you wish.

Remove from the grill and serve immediately or cover with aluminum foil until ready to serve. Do NOT leave them exposed or try to use the oven or microwave to warm them after they are done. This will dry them out. Aluminum foil will do a good job of keeping them hot and juicy until they are served.