

Pork Chops Baked with Wild Mushrooms and Creme Fraiche

Ingredients

6 large pork loin chops, weighing about 8 oz (225 g) each

½ oz (10 g) dried porcini mushrooms

7 fl oz (200 ml) crème fraîche

2 oz (50 g) butter

1 level dessertspoon chopped fresh thyme, plus 6 sprigs, to garnish

12 oz (350 g) dark-gilled, open-cap mushrooms

juice 1 large lemon

1½ level tablespoons plain flour

salt and freshly milled black pepper

Pre-heat the oven to gas mark 4, 350°F (180°C).



Method

First of all, place the porcini mushrooms in a bowl, pour on enough boiling water just to cover them, then leave them to soak for 20 minutes. Then place a sheet of foil (large enough to wrap the chops in) in the roasting tin. Now, in a large frying pan, melt the butter and fry the chops to a nice, nutty, golden colour on both sides. As you brown them, transfer them on to the foil, then season each one with salt and freshly milled black pepper and sprinkle on the thyme. Now chop the open-cap mushrooms roughly and fry them in the same pan you browned the meat in, adding a little more butter if you think it needs it. When the juices start to run, drain the porcini, squeeze out any excess moisture, then chop them small and add them to the fresh mushrooms along with the lemon juice. Let the lemon juice bubble for about 1 minute, then sprinkle in the flour and stir with a wooden spoon, absolutely ignoring what it looks like as all will be well in the end. Now spoon the mixture over the pork chops, then, finally, top each one with a large blob of crème fraîche. Place a sprig of thyme on each, then wrap up loosely in the foil, sealing securely, but leaving some space between the chops and the foil. Then bake in the oven for 1 hour exactly. Serve the chops with all the delicious juices poured over and garnish with the sprigs of thyme. As this is very rich you need to keep the vegetables quite simple