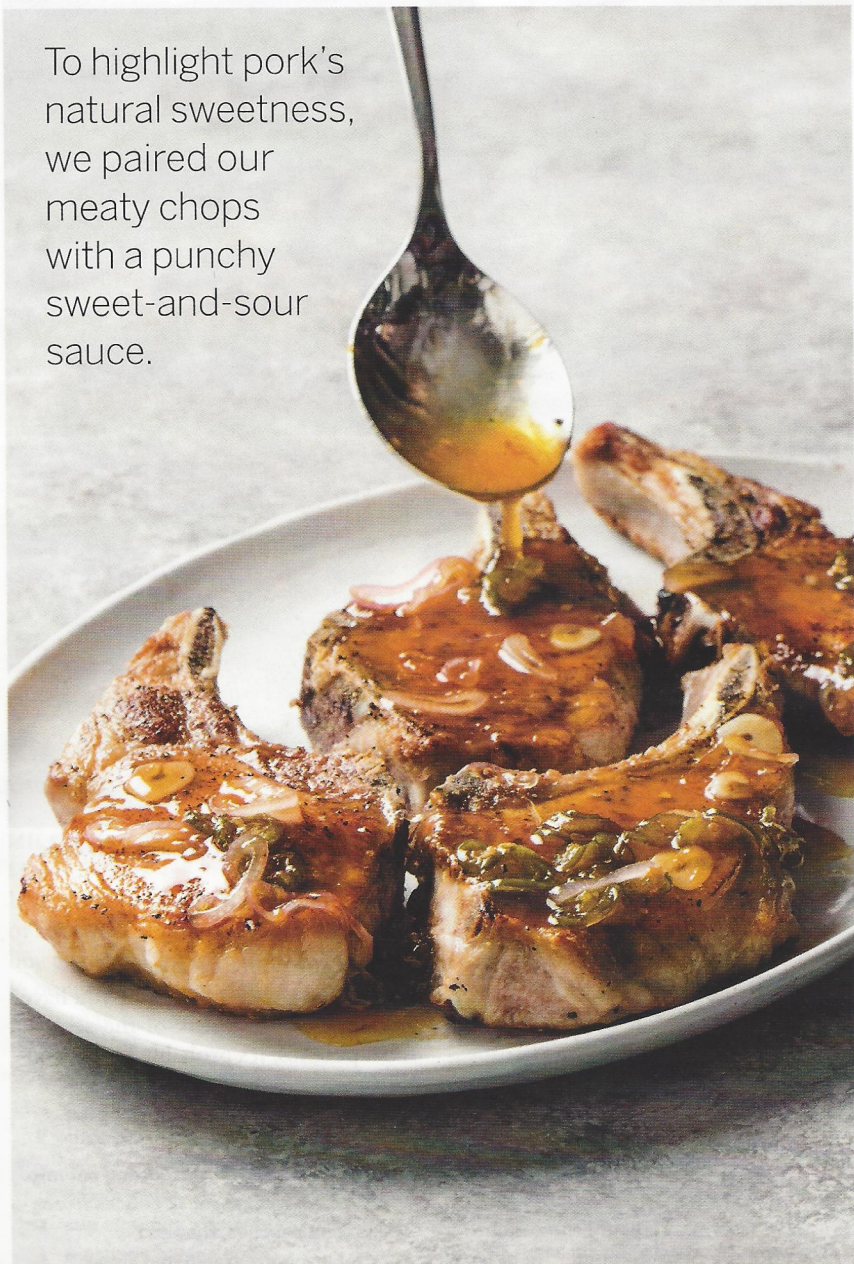


To highlight pork's natural sweetness, we paired our meaty chops with a punchy sweet-and-sour sauce.



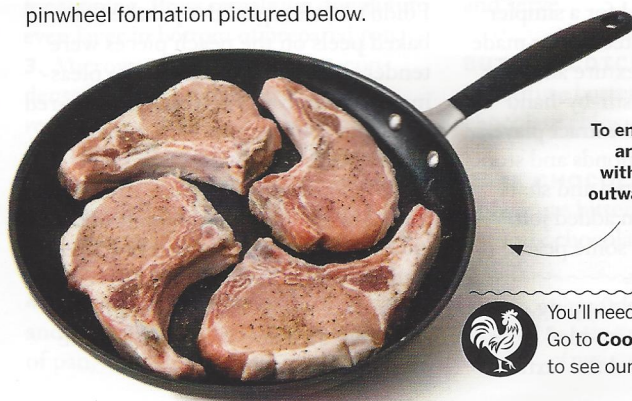
Our glazy pan sauce is sweet, tangy, and a tad spicy from the sting of fresh jalapeño.

Early Salting: Secret Weapon

This recipe calls for sprinkling the raw pork chops with salt on both sides and letting them sit in the refrigerator for 1 to 24 hours. Why? Salting raw meat in advance of cooking gives the salt time to penetrate the meat, making it taste better but also helping the chops hold on to their moisture when cooked, resulting in juicier meat. The same principle is at work when you brine meat before cooking. A salting rule of thumb: The larger the cut of meat, the longer you should let it sit, salted, before cooking.

Porky Pinwheel

To get all the chops to fit and lie flat in the skillet (for optimum browning and even cooking), we arrange them in the pinwheel formation pictured below.



To ensure even cooking, arrange the chops with the bones facing outward and the meat in the center.

JALAPEÑO-APRICOT GLAZED PORK CHOPS

Serves 4

We prefer natural pork here, but if your pork is enhanced (injected with a salt solution), decrease the salt in step 1 to ½ teaspoon per chop. Use pork chops of the same thickness to ensure even cooking. Pork chops can buckle during cooking and cook unevenly. To prevent this, we use kitchen shears to snip the fat surrounding the loin portion of each chop.

- 4 (6- to 8-ounce) bone-in pork rib chops, ¾ to 1 inch thick, trimmed**
- Kosher salt and pepper**
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- 1 jalapeño chile, stemmed and sliced into thin rings**
- 1 shallot, sliced thin**
- 2 garlic cloves, sliced thin**
- ½ cup apricot preserves**
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar**

- 1.** Using kitchen shears, snip through fat surrounding loin muscle of each chop in 2 places about 2 inches apart, being careful not to cut too deeply into meat. Sprinkle each chop with ¾ teaspoon salt. Place chops on large plate, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours.
- 2.** Pat chops dry with paper towels and season with pepper. Heat oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Place chops in skillet and cook until golden brown and meat registers 140 degrees, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer chops to platter and tent with aluminum foil.
- 3.** Add jalapeño, shallot, and garlic to fat left in skillet and cook over medium heat until softened, about 1 minute. Add preserves and vinegar, bring to quick boil, then remove from heat. Add any accumulated meat juices from platter to skillet and season sauce with salt and pepper to taste. Pour sauce over chops. Serve.



You'll need a good nonstick skillet here. Go to CooksCountry.com/nonstick to see our testing results.