**Mint Jellyless Lamb Chops**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ingredients:**  12 lamb chops coarse sea salt (or regular table salt is fine if you don't have fleur de sel or other premium cooking salts) fresh ground pepper 3 Tbsp. olive oil  **Instructions:**  1.  Throw out the mint jelly. :)  <--- ok, ok, I'm just making a point - you won't need it!  2.  Generously salt and pepper every lamb chop on both sides.  Preheat the oven to 400°.  3.  Heat a really large cast iron pan (or Le Creuset or similar oven-safe pan) on the stove until it's searing hot.  4.  Place the olive oil in it and swirl it around to coat the bottom.  After about 45 seconds, place the lamb chops in the pan.  This might take a bit of strategically fitting them all in the same pan, but you can do it!  5.  Don't move the lamb chops and heat them for about 2 - 3 minutes until the bottoms are starting to brown.  Flip them over using tongs.  6.  After 2 minutes, turn off the heat on the stove.  Tear off a really big piece of aluminum foil and cover the chops in the pan with it, like a tent.  7.  Place the foil-tented pan in the oven for approximately 5 - 6 minutes - no more!  The idea here is to produce tender medium to medium rare lamb.  When you over cook lamb, it gets dry and tasteless.  We're going for juicy and soft.  8.  Remove the entire pan from the oven and do not uncover it.  The tented foil will retain the heat in the pan and the chops will continue to cook internally while they rest for 2 - 3 minutes.  You want the juices to sink back into the meat before you cut into them or serve them. | **Special Notes:**  Serves 3 - 4; or 2 very hungry people.  I like to serve Pinot Noir or a Petit Syrah with lamb.  It's got more of a gamey (but pleasant) taste than pork chops, and I find that these wines complement it well.  You can also go with a buttery Sauvignon Blanc.  When I made these, I served lentils cooked in chicken broth (with a little salt), and sautéed garlic spinach on the side.  I recommend a leafy green vegetable or broccoli to serve with the lamb to add some color to your plate, and potatoes work nicely as a side dish, too - especially mashed.  If prefer to let the lamb speak for itself, but it you like a more pungent note, sprinkle some minced garlic on the chops after you flip them over on the stove.  And, finally, if you just need your mint jelly accompaniment, feel free to serve along side. |