

Chop, chop: lamb on the grill

Give burgers and chicken a rest the next time you barbecue

By **GRETCHEN MCKAY**
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Hamburgers and chicken are popular choices when it comes to cooking on the grill. Both are relatively inexpensive, can be dressed up or dressed down with various toppings and sauces and don't take a whole lot of culinary prowess to get a great summer meal on the table.

Yet there are occasions when it's nice to think outside the box, and throw something a little more inspired on the grill. For those times when you're willing to spend a bit more on ingredients, you might try this recipe for marinated lamb chops.

Lamb is pretty easy to cook on the grill — it only takes a few minutes on each side to get a nice sear — and if you take the time to marinate it (longer is better), the end result will be so flavorful and tender that even people who think they don't like lamb will love it.

A long soak in a spicy jalapeno-garlic marinade gives the chops exactly the

right amount of kick, with a minty finish. They're served atop a quick saute of peas with more mint and a squeeze of lemon.

It all comes together in about 15 minutes, so it works just as well for a mid-week meal as it does for a weekend cookout. I used pork loin chops, which have a little bit more meat (and are less expensive) than a rib chop.

GRILLED LAMB CHOPS WITH MINTED PEAS

For chops

1 large jalapeño pepper
1 clove garlic

1/2 cup fresh mint
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
4 3/4-inch-thick lamb loin chops (about 2 pounds, with fatty tips trimmed)
For peas
2 cups fresh or frozen peas, thawed
1 generous pinch kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 pinch sugar
Zest and juice 1 lemon
1 small handful fresh mint, roughly chopped
Lemon wedges, for serving

Make marinade: In a food processor or blender, blitz jalapeño,

garlic, mint, olive oil, salt, pepper, sugar and vinegar until smooth.

Place the lamb chops in a resealable plastic bag or glass container with about 1/4 cup of the marinade. Smooth it around.

Let sit overnight in the fridge if possible, or for at least an hour at room temperature. If you refrigerate it, allow it to warm up to room temperature on the kitchen counter for about 30 minutes before cooking.

Prepare grill for medium heat. Grill lamb chops on medium heat for 7-10 minutes, flipping once halfway, or until the internal temperature reads 130 degrees for medium-rare or 135 degrees for medium.

Allow the lamb chops to rest on a plate covered with aluminum foil for 5 minutes before

serving.

If you'd rather cook on the stove top, heat a grill pan over high heat until almost smoking, add the chops and sear for about 2 minutes.

Flip the chops over and cook for another 3 minutes for medium-rare and 3 1/2 minutes for medium.

While lamb is resting, prepare peas. Throw peas into a saute pan and season with salt, pepper and sugar.

Add lemon zest and juice and cook over medium heat for 2-3 minutes, or until peas are warmed through. Garnish with mint.

Serve lamb chops alongside warm peas, with wedges of lemon.

Serves 4.

— Adapted from food52.com



Bob Bull Collection

A military parade on Depot Street in downtown La Grande.

BUILDING

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Aaron Sommer, who built the building, was born in Alsace in 1836 and came to La Grande in 1862 settling into old town. When the railroad came into La Grande, like many others, Sommer realized that property near the railroad would be a good investment. So after the fire of 1891 he constructed the building at the northwest corner of Adams and Depot just a block away

from the railroad station. He later constructed the Sommer Hotel.

Oliver Edward Silverthorn was born in Muscatine County, Iowa, in 1854. In 1884 he married Mary Harrod. In the early 1900s the couple started moving west, finally settling in Oregon in 1902. In 1922 he left the Sommer Building and moved to 1210 Adams where he and Lynn Wright formed the Silverthorn-Wright Drug Store. At this time George H. Glass opened his drug store in

the Sommer building location. In the early 1930s Silverthorn moved to Halsey, where he died in 1933.

Paul Lederle was born in 1846 in Baden, Germany. He immigrated to the United States in 1867. By 1880 he was married to his wife, Lizzie, and they were living in Topeka, Kansas, with their six-year-old daughter, Pauline. Paul was working as a tailor. In 1889 Paul and Pauline had moved to Pendleton. The next year they moved to La Grande

and went into business.

Pauline was 21 and already on her way to becoming a tailor. Around 1903 Paul suffered a debilitating stroke, causing paralysis and loss of speech, and was taken to the St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton. He never returned home and died in 1916. About year before Paul died, and 20 years after being in the Sommer building, Pauline moved her thriving business into the Sommer Hotel.

Keep looking up! Enjoy!

POPCORN

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I got a little fancy with my last sweet variety. I melted semi-sweet chocolate and poured it over one batch of popcorn, and melted white chocolate and poured it over another. Then I cleverly mixed together the two batches to form Dark/White Chocolate Popcorn.

The two flavors play especially well off each other, which I guess is not a surprise. But somehow the popcorn makes it better. And while I am generally no particular fan of white chocolate, I could eat it on popcorn all day. In fact, I did.

Back in a savory mood, I made Curry Popcorn, which is more than mere curry powder mixed into butter and poured over popcorn. It is that, but also mixed with golden raisins and pistachios for a multiflavored snack that is absolutely delicious.

Next up was Old Bay Popcorn, which features the famous spice used to flavor crabs and shrimp all along the East Coast. It is the authentic flavor of the Mid-Atlantic region, imbuing popcorn (in this case) with the taste of the eternal sea.

Finally, I turned to the all-purpose spice mix from the Middle East, Za'atar. It goes well on everything else, I thought, so why not popcorn?

Why not, indeed. Za'atar is a mixture of a dried green herb (the brand I used features thyme) with seeds (ground coriander, sesame seeds), salt and lesser amounts of other herbs such as parsley and oregano. You'll find it sprinkled into olive oil or yogurt, scattered on top of hummus or used as a seasoning for meats or vegetables.

Popcorn is a vegetable. Za'atar mixed with butter awakens the flavor of popcorn and lifts it to herbaeous new heights.

No one needs to make a rainbow bagel ever again. But flavored popcorn is here to stay. I hope.

MAPLE-BOURBON POPCORN

Yield: 5 servings

3 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon brown sugar
3 tablespoons bourbon
1/4 cup maple syrup
12 cups popped popcorn
1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Line a baking sheet with waxed paper and set aside.

2. Melt butter in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Add brown sugar and cook, stirring frequently, until sugar dissolves. Add bourbon; it should boil immediately. Simmer, stirring frequently, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in maple syrup and cook until somewhat thickened.

3. Pour mixture over popcorn and toss with salt. Taste and add more salt if needed.

Per serving: 203 calories; 8 g fat; 4 g saturated fat; 18 mg cholesterol; 2 g protein; 27 g carbohydrate; 11 g sugar; 3 g fiber; 237 mg sodium; 22 mg calcium
Recipe by Daniel Neman

CURRY POPCORN

Yield: 6 servings

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
1 cup golden raisins
1 cup shelled pistachios
1 1/2 tablespoons granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon curry powder
8 cups hot popcorn
1 teaspoon kosher salt

Melt butter in a saucepan over low heat. Add raisins, pistachios, sugar and curry powder, and cook 2 minutes. Toss with popcorn and salt.

Per serving: 320 calories; 18 g fat; 6 g saturated fat; 20 mg cholesterol; 7 g protein; 39 g carbohydrate; 21 g sugar; 5 g fiber; 212 mg sodium; 42 mg calcium
— Recipe by the Food Network

PEANUT BUTTER POPCORN

Yield: 6 servings

1/2 cup honey
1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons

granulated sugar
1/2 cup peanut butter
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon salt
8 cups hot popcorn
1 cup peanuts

Line a baking sheet with a piece of waxed paper and set aside. Heat honey and sugar over medium heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves, about 3 or 4 minutes. Stir in peanut butter, vanilla extract and salt until smooth. Pour over hot popcorn and peanuts, and toss. Spread on prepared baking sheet; taste and add more salt if necessary. Let cool.

Per serving: 248 calories; 11 g fat; 2 g saturated fat; no cholesterol; 5 g protein; 37 g carbohydrate; 34 g sugar; 1 g fiber; 93 mg sodium; 12 mg calcium
Recipe by the Food Network

DARK/WHITE CHOCOLATE POPCORN

Yield: 8 servings

4 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
4 ounces white chocolate, chopped
12 cups popcorn, divided
Salt, to taste

1. Set up a double boiler or place a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water; make sure the bowl does not touch the water. Add semisweet chocolate and stir until melted and smooth. Toss with 6 cups of popcorn, and salt to taste.

2. Repeat process with the white chocolate. Combine all popcorn in a large bowl to serve.

Per serving: 346 calories; 18 g fat; 11 g saturated fat; 9 mg cholesterol; 5 g protein; 44 g carbohydrate; 33 g sugar; 3 g fiber; 329 mg sodium; 86 mg calcium
— Recipe by Daniel Neman

SPICED POPCORN

Yield: 6 servings

1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon cracked black peppercorns
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup unpopped popcorn

1. Measure cayenne, cumin, turmeric, cracked peppercorns and salt onto a plate and place near stove.

2. Place oil and one kernel popcorn in a large pot on a burner. Turn heat to high, cover pot and cook until kernel pops. Then add popcorn and cover again (be careful not to breathe the fumes before covering). When corn starts popping, quickly add spices. Cover and cook, shaking constantly, until the popping stops.

Per serving: 124 calories; 9 g fat; 7 g saturated fat; no cholesterol; no protein; 1 g carbohydrate; no sugar; 1 g fiber; 388 mg sodium; 4 mg calcium

Recipe from "City Cuisine" by Susan Feniger and Mary Sue Milliken

CINNAMON SUGAR POPCORN

Yield: 6 servings

3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
12 cups hot popcorn

Mix together the cinnamon, sugar and salt, and set aside. Melt the butter in a small saucepan and pour over popcorn. Toss thoroughly with cinnamon-sugar-salt mixture.

Per serving: 404 calories; 25

g fat; 15 g saturated fat; 61 mg cholesterol; 6 g protein; 42 g carbohydrate; 4 g sugar; 7 g fiber; 586 mg sodium; 15 mg calcium
— Recipe by Daniel Neman

PARMESAN AND CHIPOTLE POPCORN

Yield: 3 servings

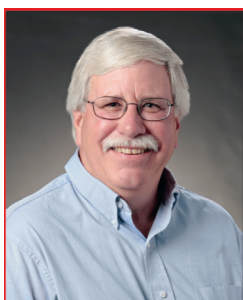
1 bag microwave popcorn
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter, melted
1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 teaspoon ground chipotle pepper
2 teaspoons fleur de sel or other salt

Microwave the popcorn according to directions on the package, until the popcorn stops popping. Carefully pour the hot popcorn into a large bowl and immediately pour on the butter, then the Parmesan cheese, ground chipotle pepper and salt. Toss well and serve hot.

Per serving: 361 calories; 29 g fat; 14 g saturated fat; 50 mg cholesterol; 8 g protein; 18 g carbohydrate; no sugar; 3 g fiber; 489 mg sodium; 186 mg calcium

— Recipe from "Cooking for Jeffrey" by Ina Garten

OLD BAY POPCORN



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