

CHAPTER 2

EAT

Thick Cut Pork Chop with Cheddar Grits and Apple Chutney

In Chapter 14, Jason plans dinner with Lia at their favorite restaurant, On Swann, to distract himself from the unveiling scheme. Unfortunately, dinner does not go as planned, and Jason starts questioning Lia's intentions.

On Swann is also my family's favorite restaurant, and I rarely stray from the double pork chop with mostarda and Anson Mill cheddar grits. It is a meal that could be shared, but I usually eat as much as possible and bring the rest for lunch the next day. We also celebrated *Bluebird's* book launch with the "Big Pork Chop."

Preparing this meal was a nice challenge as I have never made such a thick pork chop or any type of grits. After researching, I settled on a bone-in thick-cut pork chop topped with apple chutney and simplified cheddar grits. On Swann is hard to beat, but my rendition was delicious, and my wife may be addicted to the cheddar grits.

Ingredients

- 2 thick cut pork chops
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup quick-cooking grits (not instant)
- 1 ¼ cups half-and-half
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 ½ cups grated sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 apples
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 small yellow onion
- Ginger powder
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 lemon zest and juice
- 1/8 tsp coriander

Instructions - Cheddar Grits

- 1.) Bring 4 cups of water to a boil in a heavy saucepan. Add 2 tsp of salt and slowly add the grits. Constantly stir with a wooden spoon.
- 2.) Reduce the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the grits thicken. This usually takes 5-10 minutes.
- 3.) Add the half-and-half and butter to the grits and stir. Bring to a simmer. Cover the pot, reduce heat to low, and cook, stirring often, for 40 minutes. When it is ready, it will be very smooth and creamy.
- 4.) Take off the heat, stir in the cheese, and add pepper to taste.

Instructions - Apple Chutney

- 1.) Peel and chop the onion and the apples.
- 2.) Add the apples, red wine vinegar, honey, onion, ginger, and garlic to a heavy-bottomed pan. Place the pan over low heat and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring often.
- 3.) Zest the lemon into the pan and squeeze half the juice.
- 4.) As it cooks, the apples and onions should turn golden brown. When they have, remove them from the heat and add chili flakes, salt, and pepper.

Instructions - Pork Chops

- 1.) Rub the chops with olive oil and apply salt and pepper. Pork needs a lot of salt to bring out the flavor, so don't be shy.
- 2.) Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
- 3.) Heat a cast iron skillet over medium-high and sear the pork chops on each side for 2 minutes. Place it in the oven and cook until the pork reaches an internal temperature of 145 degrees Fahrenheit, about 15 minutes.
- 4.) Remove from the oven and let rest for 10 minutes.
- 5.) Serve with chutney on top, a side of cheddar grits, and a nice Paloma. Enjoy!!

CHAPTER 3

DRINK

Paloma

Terrance Browning is a respected banker and CEO of Safe Harbor Bank with a dark side. His favorite drink is the refreshing and tart Paloma. It appears to be his chosen avenue to calm stressful situations. The drink first appears in Chapter 20 of *Bluebird* when Jason is called to an after-hours meeting to discuss the fraud. He is shocked to find an aggressive atmosphere, which Terrance tries to defuse with a nice Paloma using the good tequila. Ironically, in Spanish, the name Paloma means peace, love, and harmony, none of which appear to have much to do with Terrance.

The pinkish-red drink is a tart and somewhat sweet tequila-based citrusy bubbly cocktail. It combines grapefruit and lime and is quite refreshing. It's traditionally served on the rocks in a highball glass.

Ingredients

- 6 oz. good tequila
- ½ oz. fresh lime juice
- 6 oz. fresh grapefruit juice
- Pinch of salt
- 12 oz Fresca or Squirt soda
- Crushed ice
- 3 lime wedges

Instructions

- 1.) Mix the tequila, lime juice, and grapefruit juice.
- 2.) Fill a glass ½ full of crushed ice and pour the mixture over.
- 3.) Top with the soda and garnish with lime wedges.
- 4.) Enjoy

“I’ve taken the liberty of ordering you a nice Paloma.”

Terrance meeting with Oak at his private club.