



Chapter Six

RACK OF LAMB WITH THUMBELINA CARROTS



Gordon Ramsay Teaches Cooking II: Restaurant Recipes at Home

RACK OF LAMB WITH THUMBELINA CARROTS

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This is the ultimate dinner party showstopper. It's glamorous, it hits the table, it's got that wow factor.

Chapter Review

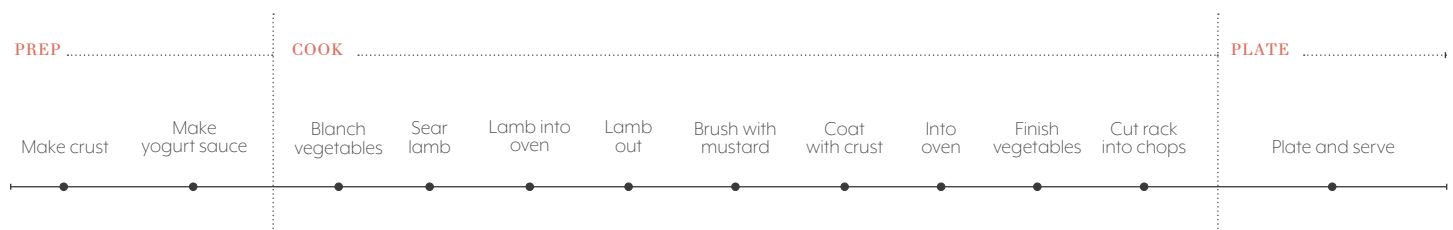
Rack of lamb is a tender, lean cut with most of the fat along the line of the bones. Because there isn't a lot of fat to protect the meat in a hot pan, gently sear the meat over high heat. If the pan is too hot, a hard sear will develop and the meat will tear when you slice the rack into chops. Ask your butcher for a French trim to get the clean bones Gordon uses as a handle to turn the rack in the pan. Gordon uses a cast-iron pan because it retains even heat that finishes the lamb during the resting period.

Gordon's version of rack of lamb is lighter and brighter than some of the traditional preparations. He uses lemon thyme during the sear instead of the classic rosemary and updates the mint jelly commonly paired with lamb with a mint yogurt sauce. The bright flavor of mint lifts the lamb and the cooling yogurt sauce helps mellow the heat of the mustard rub and basil crust.

The crust will protect the lamb during cooking, caramelize in the oven, and add flavor. Brushing the lamb with mustard while hot allows the mustard to seep into the meat to lighten the gamey flavor of lamb and gives the crust a way to stick to the meat. The breadcrumbs give the crust structure and Parmesan seasons the crust and helps it meld together. If you're using this recipe as a course in a meal, you can stop once the lamb is coated with crust, clear your guests' plates, and then get the lamb back in the oven. Make the crust and yogurt sauce ahead of time so you can plate quickly and spend more time with your guests.

Gordon uses a combination of carrots for their natural sweetness and turnips for their earthiness. Thumbelina carrots have a unique, teardrop-like shape similar to the turnips. Whatever type of carrots and turnips you use in this dish, be sure they are cut to a similar size for even cooking. The caramelization process will create a salty/sweet, candy apple-like flavor profile, balanced by the earthiness of the turnips; the star anise and cinnamon will surprise your guests with a new flavor profile of familiar ingredients.

RECIPE TIMELINE



RACK OF LAMB WITH THUMBELINA CARROTS

*Prep*

- The basil crust can be made and stored in airtight containers in a cool dark area for up to one week.
- The yogurt sauce can be made without the mint 3 to 5 days in advance. (The acids in the yogurt and the lemon juice will turn the mint gray.) Add the mint the day of.

Ingredient Notes

- Colorado lamb racks are much larger than New Zealand lamb racks. If using Colorado racks, plate only two Colorado lamb chops per plate. They also take longer to cook so sear the sides 2 minutes longer each to help speed up the cooking process. When slicing your lamb, if it is bleeding at all, dab the lamb chops on paper towels before plating.
- Panko is made from Japanese white bread that has no brown crust. Italian seasoned bread crumbs cannot substitute for panko. You can make your own panko by removing the crust from a loaf of plain white bread and shredding in a food processor with the shredding attachment. Spread the shredded bread in an even layer on a sheet tray and bake at 300°F for 5 to 10 minutes. The bread crumbs have to be stirred and rotated at least twice times throughout the drying process to make sure every piece is exposed to the heat. Once cooled, seal the dried bread crumbs in an airtight container or vacuum sealed bag. You can store them in a cool, dry cabinet for a few weeks, or freeze for several months.
- Greek yogurt is the recommended yogurt for this sauce because it has less water content than regular yogurt. If you can't find Greek yogurt you can strain regular yogurt in a cheesecloth-lined sieve.
- Any small, waxy potato can be used in place of new potatoes like fingerlings or small or diced Yukon Golds or Kennebecs.
- You can substitute baby carrots or dice regular carrots for the Thumbelina carrots and diced turnips for the Tokyo turnips. If you don't like turnips you can modify the dish with another root vegetable cut to a similar size.
- Gordon uses lemon thyme to brighten up this lamb dish, but a variety of herbs and aromatics can be used. Rosemary is a classic choice because its pungent flavor is strong enough to hold up to the wild, gamey flavor of the lamb.

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Dietary Restrictions

- This dish can be made gluten-free by using a gluten-free brand of panko.

Beverage Pairing

- Gordon recommends you pair this dish with a young Bordeaux-style red wine.

Basil Crusted Rack of Lamb With Glazed Thumbelina Carrots, New Potatoes, and Mint Yogurt Sauce

Serves 4

Basil Crust

½ cup basil leaves, packed

¼ cup fresh flat leaf parsley, packed

8 ounces panko bread crumbs

2 tablespoons kosher salt

½ cup Parmesan, grated

Pulse all of the ingredients in a food processor or blender until bright green and evenly processed. Taste and add salt or more Parmesan if needed.

Rack of Lamb

2 New Zealand rack of lamb, 14 to 16 ounces,
7 to 8 bone, frenched, fat cap removed

2 tablespoons grapeseed oil

Salt and pepper to taste

4 garlic cloves, crushed

1 bunch thyme

2 tablespoons butter, cubed

4 tablespoons Dijon mustard

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Place the lamb racks on a sheet tray and season all sides liberally with salt and pepper. Press all sides of the the meat into the remaining seasoning on the sheet tray to evenly coat.

Heat two medium cast-iron pans over medium-high heat. Add grapeseed oil and let the pan begin to smoke. Add the lamb racks to the pan bone side up with the racks resting on the edge of the pans. Use the bones as a handle to turn the lamb and sear each side for 60 seconds or until browned. Add the thyme, garlic, and butter to the pan and baste for another minute moving the toasted thyme and garlic to the back of the lamb racks. Transfer to oven and roast for 4 to 5 minutes or until the lamb is rare (125°F internal temp).

Transfer lamb to a sheet tray bone side down. Set the cast-iron pans aside for later use. Use a pastry brush to brush the flesh sides of the lamb generously with Dijon mustard. Let the mustard absorb into the meat for 2 minutes then brush with a second coat. This will act as an adhesive for the bread crumbs.

Pour the basil crust onto a flat pan or plate. Holding onto the lamb racks by the bones, dip the lamb into the crust mixture and turn to coat. You can use your hands to sprinkle the crust in between the bones. Lightly shake off any excess.

Basil Crusted Rack of Lamb With Glazed Thumbelina Carrots, New Potatoes, and Mint Yogurt Sauce

Serves 4

Glazed Carrots and Turnips

8 Thumbelina carrots, peeled
8 Tokyo turnips, peeled
4 star anise
4 cinnamon sticks
2 tablespoons honey
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed
¼ cup chicken stock
Maldon or kosher salt to taste

Bring a medium pot of water to a boil and add enough salt to the water to be able to taste it easily. The salt will permeate into the vegetables so each bite of the finished product will be seasoned throughout. To make an ice bath, fill a large mixing bowl halfway with ice and add cold water to cover.

Once the water is at a boil, blanch the carrots for 2 minutes. If the sizing of the carrots is uneven, add the larger carrots first and let them cook for 1 minute before adding in the smaller carrots. Transfer blanched carrots to the ice bath for 3 to 5 minutes to stop the cooking process. Bring the blanching water back to a boil and repeat with the turnips. As each group of blanched vegetables is finished chilling in the ice bath, transfer to a sheet tray lined with paper towels to dry.

Heat olive oil in a large sauté pan on medium heat, then add the cinnamon sticks, star anise, honey, and a pinch of salt. Once the honey starts to bubble, add the blanched carrots and turnips and toss to coat. Cook over medium heat for 3 minutes, turning the vegetables frequently. Add butter to the pan and stir frequently. Let the butter begin to froth and deglaze the pan with chicken stock. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes until the liquid has evaporated and the carrots and turnips are cooked through.

Basil Crusted Rack of Lamb With Glazed Thumbelina Carrots, New Potatoes, and Mint Yogurt Sauce

Serves 4

New Potatoes

8 new potatoes
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed
Salt and pepper to taste

In a medium pot add the new potatoes and enough cold water to submerge. Bring the water to a boil over medium-high heat. Season generously with salt and turn the heat down to a simmer. Cook the potatoes for 10 minutes and test for doneness with the tip of your paring knife or a toothpick. Drain the potatoes and cool in the refrigerator for 10 minutes.

Slice cooled potatoes in half lengthwise. Heat olive oil in a large nonstick sauté pan over medium heat. Add the potatoes in cut side down and season with salt and pepper. Cook without turning for 3 to 5 minutes or until the potatoes start to brown. Flip the potatoes over and add the butter. Reduce the heat to medium-low and let the potatoes cook for 3 more minutes until warmed through.

Mint Yogurt Sauce

1 cup Greek yogurt
12 mint leaves
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
Maldon salt to taste

Stack the mint leaves, roll into a tight log, and slice along the width to chiffonade. Turn the mint 90° and run your chef's knife through again for a rough chop. In a small bowl, mix together the yogurt and mint. Add salt and lemon zest to taste. Finish with a squeeze of lemon juice.

Plate + Garnish

Maldon salt

Spoon yogurt sauce onto the plate at 6 o'clock. Use a mini offset spatula to spread the yogurt sauce from 6 o'clock to 8 o'clock. Lay 2 carrots and 2 turnips, alternated in color, to the left of the yogurt. Garnish the vegetables with 1 star anise and 1 cinnamon stick. Fan 4 new potatoes above the carrots and turnips, toward the left corner of the plate.

Stand the lamb racks upward holding onto the rib bones with the loin side facing you. Slice between each rib to create three individual lamb chops. If the lamb was rested properly, it won't bleed onto the plate. Shingle the lamb chops starting from the top right corner down to the yogurt sauce. Finish with Maldon salt over the insides of the lamb chops.