

# Jalapeño Grilled Pork Chops

By Eric Kim

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**Total Time** 45 minutes

**Rating** ★★★★★ (1,984)



Christopher Simpson for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

Juicy jalapeños offer discernible heat, but they have a higher purpose beyond that: They provide welcome freshness with their distinct vegetal flavor. When blitzed with aromatic cilantro stems and plenty of garlic, jalapeños transform into a punchy marinade that flavors and tenderizes pork chops gloriously, and tinges them a bright Reptar-Bar green, too. That brilliant color, evidence of the chlorophyll in the peppers and herbs, stays vibrant even after a fiery kiss on the grill.

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## INGREDIENTS

**Yield:** 4 servings

### FOR THE PORK CHOPS

- 5 large jalapeños, stemmed
- 5 large garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 bunch cilantro stems, cut into 1-inch pieces (about 1 packed cup)
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- ½ cup olive oil, plus more for cooking
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt (Diamond Crystal)
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar
- 8 thin-cut, bone-in pork loin chops (½-inch thick)

### FOR THE RELISH

- 1 large jalapeño, thinly sliced into rings
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced into rings
- ⅓ cup rice vinegar

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## PREPARATION

### Step 1

**Make the pork chops:** In a food processor, blitz the jalapeños, garlic, cilantro stems, rice vinegar, olive oil, salt and sugar until smooth. Place the pork chops in a large bowl or resealable container and pour the marinade over them; turn the chops to evenly coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes and up to 24 hours.

### Step 2

While the chops marinate, prepare a charcoal grill for direct high-heat cooking, or heat a gas grill to medium-high.

### Step 3

**Make the relish:** In a small bowl, toss the jalapeño, red onion, rice vinegar, salt, sugar and 2 tablespoons water. Set aside to quick-pickle until ready to serve, or refrigerate for up to 24 hours.

### Step 4

**Carefully grease the grill grate:** Use tongs to grip a wadded paper towel dipped in oil and then rub the grates with the oiled towel. With the marinade clinging to them, place the pork chops on the hot greased grate. Grill until the chops are charred at the edges and no longer pink in the middle, 2 to 3 minutes per side. The

1 teaspoon kosher salt (Diamond Crystal)

2 tablespoons granulated sugar

Cilantro leaves and tender stems, for garnish

Cilantro rice or cooked white rice, for serving (optional)

meat is ready to flip when it releases easily from the grates. (If using a gas grill, close the lid between flips.) Alternatively, cook the chops on the stovetop in batches. Heat a large skillet or grill pan over medium-high. Add enough oil to lightly coat the bottom of the pan, and heat until shimmering. Add the chops, with the marinade clinging to them, to the pan. Sear until browned and caramelized at the edges and no longer pink in the middle, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Discard any remaining marinade.

#### **Step 5**

Serve the chops with the relish and cilantro on top. If you'd like, serve rice alongside.

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