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A GOOD APPETITE

Grassy, Sweet and in Season

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LATE spring to early summer is green garlic season. But if you're not looking, you might miss it.

The youngest stalks, often sold in a bunch, look more like fat scallions or skinny leeks than they do the familiar white, papery bulbs. The only thing obviously garlicky about green garlic (also called spring garlic or new garlic) is the scent, and you have to be up close to notice.

As the season progresses, the pliable pale garlic tips grow into heads with distinct cloves, still attached to a bright green stalk. These are more recognizably garlic-like, but have the fresh, grassy, sweet flavor of the young allium before it reaches maturity (at which point it is dried and cured, developing its characteristic complex earthiness).

You can use green garlic at any stage of its growth. Slender stalks can be sliced and handled much like scallions. Toss them raw in salads, dips and dressings or briefly sauté them for an aromatic pan sauce. Use the white and tender green parts; when the stalk starts to look tough and unappetizing, trim it off.

Once the green garlic forms a head, separate the cloves and use your judgment as to whether or not to peel them. (If the skin is quite thin, leave it alone; thicker, peel it off.) Then add the cloves anywhere you would use regular mature garlic. Just note that green garlic is quite mild, so you might have to use more for the same level of pungency.

This recipe amplifies the green in the garlic by stirring it into an herb-filled salsa verde. You can also use regular garlic, though you might want to reduce the amount by half.

I also added garlic chives to the mix just because I saw them at the farmers' market and figured a little more garlic flavor could only help. (Regular chives are perfectly fine.)



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The sauce, with plenty of chopped parsley and mint, is intense, bright and herbal. It makes a summery counterpoint to rich slices of seared pork. I used butterflied slices of loin that cook very quickly, but you can use bone-in chops if you give them a few more minutes on the fire (or pound them first).

And don't stop there. Serve green garlic salsa verde with grilled chicken or steak, sautéed fish or shrimp, or even with grilled bread for dipping. But do it now, before you miss the season entirely. It's easy to do.

Seared Pork Cutlets With Green Garlic Salsa Verde

TOTAL TIME

25 minutes

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 3 tablespoons chopped mint
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped garlic chives or regular chives
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped green garlic
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, more as needed
- 1/8 teaspoon chile flakes
- 1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 4 eight-ounce boneless pork loin chops, butterflied (1/4-inch thick)
- Black pepper, as needed.

PREPARATION

1. Combine the herbs, garlic, lemon, 1 teaspoon salt and chile flakes. Stir in 1/2 cup oil.
2. Season the meat with salt and pepper. Heat a large skillet over high heat. Add the remaining tablespoon of oil and reduce heat to medium-high. Add the pork and cook without moving, 3 minutes. Flip and cook until meat is just cooked through, about 3 minutes more. Let rest 5 minutes before serving, topped with salsa verde.