

Pork Cutlets with Mushrooms & Pan Gravy

Serves 4

This is comfort food for me — meat and potatoes with gravy. The mushrooms, a combination of fresh and dried, plus a little fresh sage, make it special. This time of year, I serve these with mashed potatoes, braised greens and an escarole and frisee salad.

1 tablespoon dried porcini mushrooms
1 cup boiling water
4 pork cutlets, each about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick (about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds)
1 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon butter
3 teaspoons chopped fresh sage leaves + sprig for garnish
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup brandy or grappa or substitute dry white wine
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chicken broth
10 to 12 fresh button or crimini mushrooms, thinly sliced

Instructions: Put the dried mushrooms in a bowl and cover with boiling water. Rub the cutlets with the salt and pepper.

In a frying pan, heat the olive oil and butter over medium-high heat. When the butter is foaming, add the cutlets and brown them, about 2 minutes. Turn and brown the other side. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the sage. Pour off all but a teaspoon of the fat.

Increase the heat to high and add the brandy, scraping up any clinging bits. Add the chicken broth, and reduce the heat to low. Drain the dried mushrooms, reserving the liquid. Add the mushrooms and a tablespoon of their liquid to the pan. Add the fresh mushrooms, and cover. Simmer until the cutlets are cooked through and the mushrooms are soft, about 10 minutes.

With a slotted spoon, remove the cutlets and mushrooms to a platter and cover with foil to keep warm. Stir in the remaining sage. If the pan juices seem too thin, reduce them until thickened. Pour over the cutlets and garnish with the sprig of sage. Serve hot.

Per serving: 300 calories, 39 g protein, 5 g carbohydrate, 10 g fat (3 g saturated), 105 mg cholesterol, 651 mg sodium, 1 g fiber.