



K O K O M O  
WINERY

***Apricot-Cured Pork Chops***- Pair with our Pinot Noir

**The Brine:**

- É4 cups water
- É½ cup salt
- É¼ cup sugar
- É2 tablespoons cracked pepper
- É4 bay leaves
- É1 onion, chopped
- É1 carrot, peeled and chopped
- É1 celery rib, chopped
- É2 cups apricot nectar (available fresh or as concentrate)

**The Chops:**

- É4 center-cut pork loin chops, 1 ¼ to 1 ½ inches thick
- ÉOlive oil for sautéing
- ÉApricot Vinegar Glaze (recipe follows)
- ÉSake Rice (recipe follows)

**Apricot Vinegar Glaze:**

- É¼ cup apricot nectar (available fresh or as concentrate)
- É¼ cup fruit-flavored vinegar (such as raspberry)
- É½ cup sake (Japanese rice wine)
- É1 clove garlic, pressed
- ÉSalt and freshly ground pepper

**Apricot Vinegar Glaze:**

1. In a nonreactive saucepan, combine the apricot nectar with the fruit vinegar, sake and garlic. Simmer the mixture until it reduces in volume by ½, to about ½ cup. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside.



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**The Chops:**

1. To make the brine, combine all the ingredients, except for the apricot nectar, in a saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, then remove from heat and let cool. When cool, add the apricot nectar, and refrigerate until cold.
2. For brining, use a heavy-duty plastic tub, an earthenware crock, a stainless steel bowl or even a resealable plastic bag. For the brine to do its job, there must be enough to fully cover the meat. Add the pork chops to the cold brine. Cover with plastic wrap and weight chops with a plate, if necessary, to keep them completely covered. Refrigerate for 6 to 12 hours. (The longer the chops stay in the brine, the deeper the resulting hamlike flavor.)
3. Remove the chops from the brine and pat them dry. Use a skillet large enough to hold all four chops. Add just enough oil to coat the bottom, and heat the skillet over moderately high heat. When the skillet is hot, add the chops and brown them on both sides, about 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer the pan to a 325° F oven and continue cooking the chops until they are no longer pink at the bone, about 7 to 10 minutes.
4. Remove the chops from the pan and keep them warm. Discard the fat from the pan and add the Apricot Vinegar Glaze. Bring the glaze to a boil, scraping the pan to dissolve any browned bits, then remove from the heat. Add any juices that have collected around the chops to the glaze. Unmold the Sake Rice onto heated plates. Transfer the chops to the plates and spoon the glaze over them. Serve with a green vegetable of your choice. *Serves 4.*