

Paprika-Rubbed Pork Tenderloin

START TO FINISH:
30 minutes

SERVINGS:
4

1 tablespoon sweet paprika
2 teaspoons hot smoked paprika
2 teaspoons fresh thyme, minced
Kosher salt and ground black pepper
Two 1¼-pound pork tenderloins, trimmed of silver skin and halved crosswise
2 tablespoons grapeseed or other neutral oil
6 medium garlic cloves, thinly sliced
2 teaspoons honey
¾ cup low-sodium chicken broth
2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
6 tablespoons (¾ stick) salted butter, chilled and cut into 10 pieces
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Earthy, hot smoked paprika, otherwise known as pimenton de la Vera, is a defining flavor of Basque cooking. We combine it with regular sweet paprika, thyme and garlic to give smoky-spicy flavor to pan-roasted pork tenderloins. If you can't find hot smoked paprika, use sweet smoked paprika but add ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper for a bit of heat. The tenderloins are seared on the stovetop then finished in the oven, so you'll need an oven-safe 12-inch skillet. Remove the pork from the oven when it hits 135°F; it will continue to cook with residual heat as you make the sauce. Serve this with roasted fennel and rosemary (page 235) or egg noodles tossed with browned butter and poppy seeds.

Don't add the butter all at once to the pan sauce. Swirling it in 1 tablespoon at a time creates an emulsified sauce that's glossy and full-bodied. If the sauce breaks and the butter separates, drizzle in a few drops of water while swirling the pan until the sauce once again becomes shiny and emulsified.

Heat the oven to 450°F with a rack in the middle position. In a large bowl, mix together both paprikas, the thyme and 2 teaspoons salt. Add the pork, turn to coat and massage into the meat. Let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes.

In an oven-safe 12-inch skillet over medium-high, heat the oil until shimmering. Add the pork and cook, turning occasionally, until browned on all sides, about 4 minutes. Transfer the skillet to the oven and roast until the center of the thickest piece reaches 135°F, or just slightly pink when cut into, 9 to 12 minutes.

Using an oven mitt, transfer the skillet from the oven to the stovetop. Transfer the pork to a large plate, tent with foil, and let rest 10 minutes. Meanwhile, add the garlic to the skillet and cook over medium-high, stirring constantly, until toasted and fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the honey and stir until it slightly darkens, about 30 seconds. Pour in the broth and simmer until reduced and thickened slightly, about 2 minutes.

Add the vinegar and simmer for 30 seconds. Add the butter 1 piece at a time, swirling the pan to emulsify the sauce before adding more butter. Remove from the heat and stir in the parsley. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Cut the tenderloins crosswise into thin slices and arrange on a platter. Spoon the sauce over the pork.