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Source: Cookbook titled, “Molto Italiano” by Mario Batali

Recipe: Pork Chops with Peppers & Capers

Ingredients:

4 ½ quarts of water

1 cup kosher salt

1 cup packed brown sugar

12 black peppercorns

4 bay leaves

6 pork rib chops

Salt & freshly ground black peppercorns

1 cup all-purpose flour

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

3 bell peppers – 1 each of red, green, & yellow – cored, seeded, & cut into thin strips

5 bulb onions, green tops reserved & sliced, bulbs cut into rings

¼ cup black olives, pitted & chopped

1 tablespoon hot red pepper flakes

1 tablespoon capers, with their brine

1 cup dry white wine

Steps:

1. In a small saucepan, combine 2 cups of the water, the kosher salt, brown sugar, peppercorns, & bay leaves & bring to a boil over high heat, stirring to dissolve the salt & sugar. Pour into a large pot or other container & add the remaining 4 quarts cool water. Stir to mix well, add the pork chops, cover & refrigerate overnight.

2. Drain the chops & pat dry with paper towels. Season the pork on both sides with salt & pepper, then dredge in the flour.

3. In a 12-inch saute pan, heat the olive oil over high heat until smoking. Add 3 chops to the pan & cook until dark golden brown on the first side, about 7 minutes. Turn over & cook until browned on the second side, about 4 minutes, then transfer to a plate & repeat with the other 3 chops.

4. Add the peppers, onions, olives, red pepper flakes, & capers, & stir with a wooden spoon to loosen the brown bits from the bottom of the pan. Add the wine & bring to a boil. Lower the heat, place the pork chops in the pepper mixture, & simmer for 10 minutes (the pork should be cooked to 135F).

5. Season the sauce with salt & pepper to taste. Stir in the reserved onion tops, & serve.

Mike's note: this dish came out really salty when I made it. It could be because I let it brine a little longer than it should have or maybe because I used cooking wine instead of real white wine & also had to add more. Cooking wines, which I won't be using after I use up what I have left, have salt added to

them. There's also salt in the olives & capers (& their brine). You can always add salt at the table or at the end.