



Everyone loves kebabs, but their taste can become predictable. The Southeast Asian spices in this rub give exotic flair to cubes of sirloin tip.

► Prepare grill for direct-heat cooking with medium-hot charcoal; see “Grilling Procedure,” page 168.

► Stir together all ingredients except pork chops in a bowl to form spice paste, then rub paste all over pork chops.

► Oil grill rack, then grill chops over coals, turning over occasionally and moving around if flare-ups occur, until browned, 2 to 3 minutes total.

► Move chops to area with no coals underneath, then cover with inverted roasting pan and grill, turning chops over once, until thermometer inserted horizontally into center of a chop (do not touch bone) registers 145°F, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a platter and let stand 5 minutes before serving.

COOKS' NOTES: Pork can be grilled on a gas grill. Preheat all burners on high, covered, 10 minutes. Reduce heat to moderately high and brown chops, covered, turning over occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes. Turn off 1 burner (middle one if there are 3) and put chops above shut-off burner, then grill, covered, without turning, until thermometer registers 145°F, 12 to 15 minutes.

• Pork chops, rubbed with spice paste, can marinate, covered and chilled, up to 4 hours before grilling.

• Spice paste keeps, covered and chilled, up to 1 week.

SIRLOIN KEBABS WITH SOUTHEAST-ASIAN-STYLE SPICE PASTE

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 50 MIN START TO FINISH: 50 MIN

This paste showcases the layered flavors typical of Southeast Asian cooking. While the lemongrass does require a bit of work, its subtle but penetrating flavor is key. Adjust the amount of jalapeño peppers according to your heat tolerance and the heat level of the chiles you are using. We also like to use this spice paste on any type of grilled lamb.

- 1 large fresh lemongrass stalk, tough outer leaves discarded
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 2 tablespoons minced peeled ginger
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 1 large shallot, minced
- 2 fresh jalapeño chiles, minced (3 tablespoons), including seeds
- 2 tablespoons Asian sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons white pepper
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1½ lb sirloin tip, trimmed and cut into 1-inch chunks

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: an electric coffee/spice grinder or a mortar and pestle; 8 (12-inch) wooden skewers, soaked in warm water 30 minutes

► Mince enough lemongrass from lower 4 inches of stalk to measure 2 tablespoons.

► Coarsely grind coriander seeds in grinder or with mortar and pestle, then stir together with lemongrass and remaining ingredients except sirloin in a bowl.

► Prepare grill for direct-heat cooking with medium-hot charcoal; see “Grilling Procedure,” page 168.

► Toss sirloin with ½ cup spice paste in a large bowl and thread chunks ¼ inch apart onto skewers.

► Oil grill rack, then grill kebabs, turning occasionally and moving around if flare-ups occur, 5 to 6 minutes for medium-rare.

COOKS' NOTES: Kebabs can be grilled on a gas grill. Preheat all burners on high, covered, 10 minutes. Reduce heat to moderately high and grill kebabs, covered, turning over occasionally, 5 to 6 minutes for medium-rare.

• Sirloin, rubbed with spice paste, can marinate, covered and chilled, up to 1 hour before grilling.

• Spice paste keeps, covered and chilled, up to 1 week. ▢