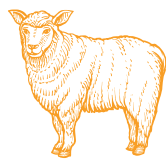




Photography: Kenneth Theysen



CHARCOAL-GRILLED LAMB CHOP LOLLIPOPS

WITH GUASACACA

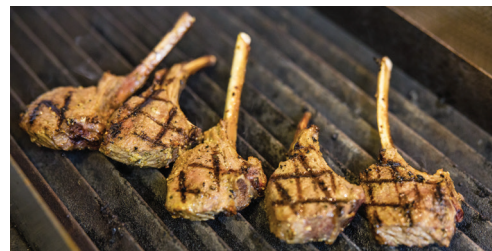
by Chef Jairo Bernard of *Oak Restaurant & Bar*

The first time Dominican Chef Jairo Bernard tried *guasacaca* was when he came to work at *Oak Restaurant & Bar*. For Venezuelan owner Ricardo Chirino, it was a staple at family barbecues, where it served as a dip for local lamb – the meat of choice.

In Venezuela, people eat *guasacaca*, not guacamole. “The main difference is that *guasacaca* is made with vinegar and guacamole with lime juice,” says Bernard. There’s also parsley, green peppers and olive oil in addition to cilantro.

Bernard came to *Oak* at its opening in April 2018, after Ricardo moved from the Eagle Beach restaurant that bears his name. Bernard’s eyes lit up the first time he tried the combination of charcoal-grilled meat with the creamy dip. The vinegar brings out the flavor of the cilantro and peppers and balances the richness of the lamb, which is crispy on the outside but tender on the inside, he says.

Now, Bernard is a *guasacaca* convert. “It’s irresistible.”



JAIRO BERNARD

Chef – Oak Restaurant & Bar

Charcoal-grilled Lamb Chop Lollipops with Guasacaca

Serves 5 as an appetizer

INGREDIENTS

Grilled Lamb

- 1 five-bone rack of lamb
- 2 tbsp. (30 ml) olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp. (15 g) chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 tsp. (5 g) kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. (1 g) ground black pepper

Guasacaca

- 1 (50 g) white onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 (230 g) green pepper, chopped
- 2 (450 g) small, ripe avocados, peeled and chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
- ⅓ cup (30 g) packed flat-leaf parsley leaves
- ⅓ cup (80 g) white wine vinegar
- ¼ cup (20 g) packed fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 tsp. (5 g) kosher salt
- ¾ cup (200 g) olive oil

Instructions

1. Cut the rack of lamb into individual chops.
2. Marinate it in the olive oil, garlic, rosemary, salt and pepper for two hours.
3. Preheat your grill to medium-high.
4. Grill the lollipops for 3 to 4 minutes on each side, or to desired doneness.
5. Transfer to a platter and let rest 10 minutes.
6. For the dip, combine all the *guasacaca* ingredients in a blender.
7. Blend until smooth. Serve as a dip for the lamb.



CHEF'S TIP

Don't worry about how you chop the *guasacaca* ingredients. They're going into the blender anyway.



HOW TO CHOOSE RIPE AVOCADOS

Where the stem comes out of an avocado, there's usually a little button top. If you can pull it off easily (avoid squishing the avocado, if you can), it's ripe.

