



How to 'French' a rack of lamb

Ingredients

Method

It might sound like a flavour combination or method of cooking, but in reality French lamb is a method of preparation that can easily be mastered by anyone with a sharp knife and a little know-how.

What does it mean to French lamb?

Having meat 'Frenched' means to remove all the excess meat, fat and cartilage from the bones of your rack. Stripping the meat away is done for aesthetic purposes – it doesn't actually change the flavour or texture of the cooked result – and simply makes the bones look a bit neater on the plate.

How to French a rack of lamb

For the purpose of these instructions, we'll be telling you how to French a full rack of lamb, however you can modify these instructions for individual cutlets quite easily. When buying your cut of lamb from the butcher, you may want to ask how it has been prepared to avoid doubling up on the work: some butchers may do some of the following steps for you before it goes on sale.

What you'll need:

- A full rack of lamb
- A sharp knife
- A clean tea towel
- A sturdy chopping board

Instructions

1. If the shoulder blade is still intact, remove this first by lifting with your non-knife hand and cutting it with your knife until it comes away. This can be saved for home stocks or given to some pets.
2. Trim away the thick layer of fat covering the ribs by making a small

incision where the shoulder blade was. Gently pull the fat and connective tissue away, and use short strokes of the knife to help them come apart more easily. You should be left with a small layer of fat covering your ribs.

3. If you're left with layers of fat that are too thick in places, use your knife to carefully shave off bits of the fat until a thin and even layer remains.
 4. If there is still a large tendon running along the top (right underneath the loin of the lamb) trim this and any additional fat with your knife.
 5. Now you're ready to get into the Frenching. Flip your lamb rack over so the ribs are facing you.
 6. Score the membrane along the centre of each bone (not in between them) with the tip of your knife. Start roughly 1 inch away from the cut bones (where the meat is) and work your way all the way down to the end.
 7. Using a clean tea towel to help you get a better grip, pull the fat and membrane away from each rib slowly. It should come away quite easily.
 8. Flip the lamb back over and use your knife to cut away the flap of membrane and fat.
 9. If the fat and membrane didn't come away cleanly, you can use the butt end of a boning knife to scrape every last scrap of tissue and meat away from the bones until they are pearly white and clean.
- If you're wanting to divide them into individual cutlets or chops, stand it on its end so the ribs are pointing to the sky. Holding on to the chop on the end, cut between the ribs in one smooth stroke – don't saw or you will get jagged ends.

What cuts can be Frenched?

Any cut with the bone left in can effectively be Frenched, including lamb shanks and leg roasts. However, it is most commonly referred to when cooking a rack of lamb or the single rib chops.

Is lamb the only meat that can be Frenched?

Any meat with the bones left in can be Frenched – including veal, pork and beef. Once you learn the steps it is quite easy to use the technique on any meat you want to use.

Notes
