

Guanciale – Italian-style Jowl Bacon

U.S.	Ingredient	Metric	Percent
8½ lb.	Pork Jowls, trimmed	3880.0 g	91.88
1/2 cup	Salt	175.0g	4.14
1/2 cup	Sugar	100.0 g	2.37
1/4 cup	Garlic, Fresh, sliced	30.0 g	0.71
6-8 sprigs	Sage, leaves, fresh	12.0 g	0.28
1½ Tbs.	Whole peppercorns	10.0 g	0.24
1½ tsp.	Cure#2	9.7 g	0.25
6-8 sprigs	Rosemary, fresh	6.0 g	0.14

6 lb. ←Dry Wt. Totals→ 2.75 Kg

This formulation is based on metric measures; U.S. measures are approximate!



Method:

1. Trim the jowls by removing any trace of the salivary glands. These look like tiny “bubbles” of meat imbedded in the fat on the inner surface.
2. Next “square off” the jowl or, on some of the larger ones, trim the jowl into a triangle.
3. Have a salt brine (¼ cup salt to 2 quarts of water) in a tub and, as you’re trimming the rest of the jowls, place them in the brine tub to kill any surface bacteria.
4. Let them soak for about 20-25 minutes, and then rinse under running water.
5. While they are soaking, prepare the spices as follows: Combine the salt, sugar and cure, mixing well, and then pulverize them in a spice grinder to mix evenly.
6. Slice the garlic cloves (I like the flavor of the red-skinned garlic as opposed to the white-skinned variety) into thin slices.
7. Place a layer of jowls in a food grade plastic tub, and sprinkle with the salt, sugar, cure mixture.
8. Spread some of the garlic and peppercorns over the jowls and place a few sprigs of bruised rosemary and bruised sage over the top of the jowls. Continue this way stacking another layer over the first and so on.
9. Cover the jowls with parchment paper, then waxed paper.
10. Place a board on the paper and add about 5 lbs of weight.
11. Store in the refrigerator for 8 days.
12. After removing from the refrigerator, scrub off the salt, spices, etc. and soak under fresh water for about 15-20 minutes.
13. Remove the jowls from the water and dry them well with a clean towel.
14. Hang the jowls on bacon hooks and air dry at 50-55°F and about 45-50% R/H for at least 6 weeks
15. The guanciale can be eaten as soon as it achieves a homogenous texture that is hard and compact. It can be eaten sliced thin as is or slightly heated and placed on thin slices of fresh country bread or used as an alternative to pancetta. Guanciale is the essential ingredient in Lazio’s (Rome’s province) pasta all’amatriciana or pasta alla carbonara.

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