

SPICY ROAST PORK WITH CRACKLING AND WHITE WINE GRAVY



Spicy roast pork with crackling and white wine gravy. Photograph: Hilary Moore for Observer Food Monthly

You have to start the day before and this will take up to 4½ hours but it is actually easy as the oven does the work. I have left the bone in: it helps to give body to the sauce. Ask your butcher to score the skin for you, for the crackling.

SERVES 12

shoulder of pork 4-4.5kg bone in and skin on

For the rub:

flaky sea salt 2 tbsp
ground pepper ½ tsp
dried marjoram 2 tbsp
ancho chillies 2, ground into flakes
garlic 4 cloves, crushed
coriander seeds 1 tbsp
hot dried chillies 3

For the roast:

onions 3, cut into quarters
large carrots 2
star anise 1
ancho chilli 1
Ceylon cinnamon stick 1 small
black peppercorns 6
fresh or dried marjoram 5 sprigs
white wine 400ml
water 600ml

DIRECTIONS

Place all the rub ingredients together in a mortar or food processor and pound or blitz until you have a nice dry mixture. Rub this all over the bottom and sides of the meat avoiding the skin on top. Place in a dish, cover with cling film and leave to marinate overnight.

The roast will take 4 to 5 hours to cook, so plan accordingly.

Heat the oven to 180C / gas mark 4. In a large, deep roasting pan, lay out all of the remaining ingredients and then place the pork on top, skin side up. Place in your oven and bake slowly for about 4 hours. Then turn the heat up to 250C / gas mark 9 and roast for another 40 minutes to an hour watching to make sure the crackling does not burn. You may need to top up the water in the bottom of the roasting tray.

When the meat is tender and starting to come away from the bone, remove it from the oven. Carefully lift the pork out of the roasting pan and on to a serving platter. Cover it loosely with foil and let it rest. Meanwhile, you can finish the gravy. Carefully lift out and discard any large spices like the cinnamon stick. Skim off any obvious fat and, using a stick blender or mouli, purée the gravy. Thin the gravy with a little water if needed, then pour into a jug for serving. Keep the gravy in a warm place.