

Boiled Ham - Prosciutto cotto

U.S.	Ingredient	Metric
9 lb.	Pork picnic (foreleg)	4 kg
8 cups	Water	2 liters
½ cup	Morton's Tender Quick Cure	125 ml
½ cup	Brown Sugar, light	125 ml
1 Tbs.	Gelatin powder	15 ml
2 tsp.	Liquid smoke*	10 ml
1 tsp.	Maple flavoring*	5 ml



* For Italian style Prosciutto cotto, substitute these ingredients with 4 dried, crushed bay leaves, 2 Tbs. dried rosemary, 2 Tbs. dried marjoram all re-hydrated in ¼ cup gin.

Method: The most difficult part of this preparation involves boning the leg. What you want to end up with is one continuous flat sheet of boneless muscles attached to the skin.

1. Remove the bones from the leg as follows: Take a boning knife and cut around the bone (from the shoulder end). Work around the piece of shoulder blade attached to the arm bone. Cut through the socket and set aside the bone.
Now work around the arm bone with the boning knife, freeing as much of the bone as possible; find the tissue-line separating the upper arm muscles (biceps) from the lower arm muscles (triceps) and with the knife, separate these bundles freeing them from the bone. Continue this way until the entire arm bone and lower arm bones in the hock are exposed. Cut away the connective tissue and soft fat and blood vessels. Cut through the elbow and remove the bones.
You will find several (4 or 5) small muscle pieces about 1 ½ inches by 4 inches loosely attached in places along the exposed muscle bundles. Separate them and carefully remove any silver skin, loose fat or connective tissue.
2. Prepare the brine by dissolving all of the above ingredients in warm water to make sure all the salt and sugar is dissolved. Then refrigerate the solution to 38°F (4°C).
3. Place the boned leg in a stainless steel container that is sized to hold the leg and have it covered by the brine.
4. Using a marinade injector or brine pump, inject the large muscles with some of the brine solution in as many areas as possible. Pour the remaining brine into the container, making sure the meat and skin are covered by the solution. Refrigerate for 48 hours. If you don't inject or pump the meat, keep it in the refrigerator for 12 days.
5. Remove the meat from the brine, lay it out flat on a rack and refrigerate it uncovered for 24 hours to dry the surfaces of the muscles.
6. Remove meat from the refrigerator, dust with dry gelatin and wrap the ham in a large cotton or muslin dishcloth. You can use the small pieces of meat that were cured along with the ham if you wish or use them for some other product.
7. Roll the ham into a neat circular bundle using the cloth as a covering. Wrap several yards of twine around the ham to help give it a circular shape.
8. Simmer in 185°F (85°C) water for two hours; remove from heat, rest at room temp for 3 hours, then refrigerate overnight.
9. Unwrap twine and cloth. Thin slice for sandwiches or thick slices for ham and eggs..enjoy!