

Prosciutto

Ingredients for 8 lbs. of meat

(I like to use the smaller size picnic hams because the large hams are too big for our family. You can prepare it either with the bone or boneless. Maybe it's psychological, but to me the one with the bone has a slightly better taste.)

US	Ingredient	Metric
1/2 cup	Salt	175.0 g
1/2 cup	Sugar, cane	125.0 g
1/2 oz.	Prague #2 cure	12.0 g
3 Tbs.	Black pepper ground	18.0 g
2 tsp.	Juniper berries, ground	3.0 g

Cured and aged, bone in



Cured and aged, boneless



Method:

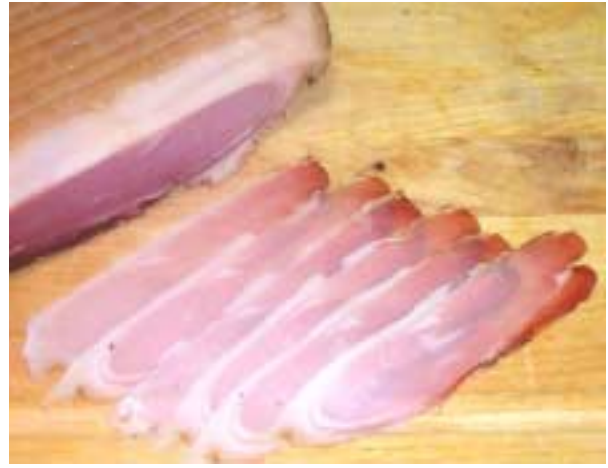
1. Premix all the above ingredients--except the pepper.
2. Chill the meat to 36°F. Rub the meat on all sides with about half of the spice-cure mixture. Hold unused salt mixture aside. (Option: Leg may be boned or left bone-in. If boned sprinkle some of the cure mixture on the inner meat surface and place leg in a ham mold under tension during the entire curing time.)
3. Lay the ham, skin side down, in a plastic (or non-reactive) container.
4. Cure the ham in the refrigerator for 30 days at 36-38°F. Keep the ham covered with a wrap to exclude air. After 15 days, rub in the remaining salt cure until it is all used.
5. After 30 days total, remove from cure and soak in tepid water for 30 minutes. [Change the water once] Air dry the prosciutto; rub in fine ground black pepper all over the flesh portion—try to keep it off the skin. Mix the pepper with a little lard so it sticks well to the meat
6. Hold ham at 130°F for 60 hrs. Remove from heat. I use a smoker cabinet (but a gas oven with a pilot light might work).
7. Hold for a minimum of 30 days at 60°F @ 70% relative humidity--you can cover them with a up-side-down paper bag to control humidity. Note: hams should be dry cured in a environment such that no flies or gnats access to the meat. You might use a ham net.



You can buy a professional ham/prosciutto cage for about \$60.00 US or you can make one out of two heavy-duty cake racks and 4 cable ties for about \$5.00 US.



Boned and ready to cure – Note: Un-clip frame and remove plastic bag before drying; reapply frame.



Boned, cured and properly dried– Note: full length slices

Len Poli – 1976
Sonoma, California