

Porchetta with sautéed potatoes

Ingredients

- 5kg/11lb piece of pork belly - ask the butcher to remove the ribs and trim off
- the excess fat
- 25g/1oz coarse salt
- 2 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tbsp fresh rosemary, roughly chopped
- large bunch fresh sage leaves, roughly chopped
- 1 tbsp fennel seeds (if you are lucky enough to find wild fennel, use it instead, finely chopped - its flavour is unique)
- 8 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 6 tbsp runny honey
- freshly ground black pepper

For the sautéed potatoes

- 400g/14oz small new potatoes, scrubbed and halved
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 8 garlic cloves, unpeeled and squashed
- 4 sprigs fresh rosemary
- salt
- freshly ground black pepper

Preparation method

1. Preheat the oven to 230C/445F/Gas 8. Lay the pork belly skin-side down onto a clean flat surface.
2. Sprinkle the salt and coarsely ground black pepper over it, rubbing them well into the meat with your finger.
3. Leave to rest for ten minutes so the salt and pepper settle well into the meat. Then sprinkle the herbs, fennel seeds and garlic evenly over it.
4. Next tie up the meat. You will need ten pieces of string, each about 30cm/12 inches long. Carefully roll the meat up width-ways and tie it very tightly with string in the middle of the joint. Then tie at either end about 1cm/½ inch from the edge and keep tying along the joint until you have used up all the string. The filling should be well wrapped, if any excess filling escapes from the sides, push it in.
5. With your hands, massage one tablespoon of the olive oil all over the joint. Then rub the remaining salt and some more black pepper over it.
6. Grease a large roasting tin with the remaining olive oil and place the

30 mins to 1 hour

preparation time

over 2 hours

cooking time

Serves 10-12

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pork in it.

7. Roast for ten minutes, then turn it over. After 15 minutes, reduce the oven temperature to 150C/300F/Gas 2 and cover the meat with aluminium foil. (If you like the crackling very crisp, don't bother with the foil, but remember that the porchetta needs to be sliced thinly and crispy crackling will make this difficult.)
8. Roast for three hours.
9. Remove the joint from the oven and coat with honey, drizzling some of the juices from the roasting tin all over it too.
10. Insert a fork in either side of the joint and lift it on to a wooden board. If you are serving the porchetta immediately, place the roasting tin on the hob and stir with a wooden spoon, scraping up all the caramelised bits from the base of the tin, until the juices from the meat reduce and thicken slightly. Slice the joint thinly and serve with the sauce. Alternatively, leave the meat to cool and slice when needed. It will keep for up to a week in the fridge.
11. For the sautéed potatoes, cook the potatoes in boiling salted water until tender, then drain.
12. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan and add the garlic and rosemary, followed by the potatoes. Allow to colour on all sides over a fairly high heat, stirring now and again to prevent them sticking to the pan.
13. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and serve with the porchetta.