



ALPHA OMEGA

Crispy Pork Belly with Red Lentils, Caramelized Curry Squash & Blood Oranges

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Yield: Serves 4-6

Pork Belly
Ingredients:

1 lb. pork belly
1/2 cup salt

Marinade
Ingredients:

1/4 cup soy sauce
1/3 cup Shaoxing rice wine
2 tbsp. brown sugar
2 tbsp. chopped garlic



Method:

- Using a paper towel, pat skin of pork belly until it is completely dry.
- Mix marinade ingredients in a bowl and then pour into a rectangular pan that is big enough to hold the pork belly.
- Place pork belly into the container, making sure only the meat touches the marinade and the skin stays completely dry. If the marinade level is too high, you can pour some of it out.
- Place in fridge for several hours or overnight.
Preheat oven to 350°F.
- Completely line a roasting pan with foil. (This will make clean-up much easier.) Pour 1 inch of water into bottom of pan.
- Place wire rack on top of roasting pan to hold the pork belly. Place the pork belly on the wire rack.
- The pork belly will cook above the water, with the pork drippings dripping below into the water.
- Make sure the pork belly is level. (If one part is lower/shorter, the skin will not cook evenly. If you have to, use something oven-safe to prop up a shorter part to keep it completely level.)
- Spread 1/2 cup of salt evenly across the pork belly skin.
- Place in top half of oven.
- Bake for about 40 minutes until meat looks cooked.
Remove pork belly and increase oven temperature to 465°F.

- The salt should have formed a crust which you should now remove.
- Once oven has reached desired temperature, place pork belly back into oven.
- Bake for another 30 minutes until skin is completely bubbly and crisp.
- Let pork belly cool a few minutes before cutting and serving.

Red Lentils

Ingredients:

1 cup red lentils
 2 cups water
 1/8 cup chopped garlic
 1 tbsp. chopped ginger
 1 onion, diced
 1 1/2 cups diced tomatoes
 1 jalapeño, minced, optional
 1/2 tsp. cumin seeds
 1/2 tsp. black mustard seeds
 1/2 tsp. turmeric powder
 Salt, to taste
 1 tbsp. vegetable oil

Method:

- Put the lentils in a strainer and rinse them under running water.
- Add them to a bowl, cover with water and let soak for 30 minutes.
- Drain and set aside.
 In a medium saucepan, combine 2 cups of water, the onions, garlic, ginger, tomatoes, chile, if using, and lentils. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
- Skim any scum from the surface.
- **DO NOT ADD SALT YET**; it will toughen the lentils, thereby lengthening their cooking time.
- Lower the heat, cover the pot with a lid and gently simmer until the lentils are tender, almost translucent, and almost falling apart, about 30 to 40 minutes.
 Whisk the lentils, releasing its natural starch, and mash some of them so the mixture becomes thick. Add salt, to taste.
 In a small sauté pan, over a medium-high flame, warm the vegetable oil. Once the oil is shimmering, add seeds and immediately cover so you don't get covered in spluttering oil and seeds!
- Add the spices. They should sizzle and bubble a little - that's the blooming and it's exactly what you want. Don't let them burn. The mixture should bloom for about 30 seconds, no more.
 Pour the oil mixture into the lentils, standing back so you don't get hurt when the mixture splutters again. Stir to combine.

Caramelized Curry Squash

Ingredients:

1 curry squash or butternut squash
1 tbsp. vegetable oil
Kosher salt, to taste

Method:

- Peel and dice 2 cups of the squash.
In a sauté pan, set over high heat, add vegetable oil.
When smoking, add the squash carefully to the pan. Let sit for 30 seconds, do NOT agitate.
- After 30 seconds shake pan and turn over pieces of squash, season with kosher salt and remove pan from heat and let sit for 5 minutes.
Remove squash from pan and keep warm.

Blood Orange

Ingredients:

2 blood oranges

Method:

- Peel oranges. Segment the oranges.

Watercress for garnish, optional

To Serve:

- Spoon a spoonful of the lentils on a plate or shallow bowl. Top lentils with pork belly. Garnish with orange segments and watercress (optional).

Enjoy!