

Home Cured Pork Belly Bacon

Dry Cured Bacon



When you make home cured bacon yourself, you are in total control over the quality of the meat and the ingredients you use to cure it! I love the thought of the chemical-free goodness of homemade bacon right in my kitchen.

There are a few considerations that need to be considered and understood when you are “Makin Bacon”.

Processes and Food Safety At Home

There is one primary concern we have to consider when curing and preserving meat, and that is protecting from possible botulism. While botulism is usually related to improper canning/preserving procedures, food-borne botulism also occurs in meats that have been improperly cured. Often this is due to methods and the process used and the possibility can be easily prevented with care and attention detailed below.

To prevent this, most commercially preserved meats contain sodium nitrite, often known as pink salt, which acts both as a preservative and a colour fixer. This also gives store-bought bacon that bright red colour. I am not interested in this colour in my bacon.

Sodium nitrite is toxic in high quantities, and has been

linked to migraines in many people.

For me the main concern about the use of sodium nitrite is that when it is exposed to high heat in the presence of protein (nitrite cured bacon) the proteins in the meat will bond with the sodium nitrite to produce the toxic nitrosamines. Studies have shown that certain nitrosamines have been proven to be deadly carcinogens. This can vary from country to country as far as government policy as to their position on the use of nitrates.

For myself at the end of the day, chemical free bacon is better in flavour and cooks in a different way with incredibly better results.

Frying nitrite-cured bacon presents the scenario for nitrosamines to form when the bacon is cooked and then to enter your system. This alone in my view is a good reason to home cure (with care).

The home cook can much better control the variables and handling procedures, and can get those assurances without the addition of nitrites. Purchasing from your local butcher that has pasture raised pork is the start as it will have a documented procedure and correct food handling record. Organic raised pork is the best choice in my opinion.

I would never use home-kill pork because environment and food safety procedures are not controlled. This is important as a poor hygiene environment can contaminate the meat with food-borne botulism and other possible contaminants.

Making Home Cured Pork Belly Bacon

Ingredients

2kg (4.4lb) piece of pork belly, skin/rind and bones removed
1/2 cup sea salt (not refined iodized table salt)
1/2 cup packed unrefined raw sugar or coconut sugar

1 tbsp. freshly ground black peppercorns
1 tsp nutmeg
1 tbsp toasted fennel seeds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup bourbon, to taste (optional)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup apple cider vinegar

Method

Cut your pork belly into a nice even square or rectangle, bacon-like block. This can be done by the butcher on request

Mix the dry ingredients in a bowl until they are well combined and the wet ingredients (if using) in a separate bowl until they are well combined.

Making sure that your hands are well washed and clean coat the meat all over with the wet ingredients (if using) until thoroughly coated everywhere.

Place one half of the dry cure mixture in the bottom of the glass dish. Place the wet pork belly into the dish and press it into the salt/sugar mix.

Carefully sprinkle the rest of the mixture across the top of the meat and press it in uniformly all around, using your hands to thoroughly apply the cure mix into every nook and cranny of your pork belly.

Cover and place the dish in the refrigerator for 5-7 days, until the meat feels firm throughout. (5 days is a good average, but check to be sure. The longer you cure it, the saltier it will be.)

Turn the bacon over every day in the liquid that will accumulate in the dish. Pour off half of the liquid each day. After 5-7 days curing remove the pork belly and wash the salt/sugar mixture off of the pork belly very carefully.

Give the soon to be bacon a good pat dry all over with a clean towels. Place the bacon on a rack over a baking sheet and

place in the fridge uncovered for 12-24 hours.

At this point, you can slice it for “green bacon” or you can smoke or roast the whole belly.

If roasting, preheat the oven to 80-90 C. (175-200 F.) Roast the pork belly in the oven to an internal temperature of 65 C (150 F) for about 90 minutes. The meat should be cooked a bit on the outside, but not all the way through.

If smoking, smoke over hickory, cherry or Applewood, a mix is fine at 80 C (175 F) until meat reaches an internal temperature of 65 C (150 F), for about 3 hours. The meat should be cooked a bit on the outside, but not all the way through.

Remove and let the bacon cool to room temperature on a wire rack over the baking sheet, tightly wrap in parchment (butchers) paper, then refrigerate for at least 4 hours, preferably overnight to set the flavour and texture.

Homemade bacon will keep for a week in the refrigerator and several months in the freezer.

**Cold smoking
Introduction from my
friend Nickie Sattler
at Blue Moose
Barbeque**

www.bluemoose.co.nz

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moosebbq](http://www.facebook.com/blue
moosebbq)



So for bacon, we either cold smoke it or hot smoke it. To cold smoke it, we use our bourbon barrel and cold smoke

generator or place it in our gas BBQ grill with an A-Maze-N tube. We use either hickory and apple wood chips for flavour (although I want to try maple or pecan as well).

We cold smoke for about 8-9 hours. To hot smoke it, we use our Oklahoma Joe Highland offset and try to keep the heat down to 150-175 F. We will use apple or hickory to smoke the bacon for 2-3 hours, until bacon reaches 150 F internal.

Manawa Honey Turmeric Chicken Skewers

Serves 4



Ingredients

2 tbsps Manawa Honey
6 chicken thighs cubed, deboned, skin-on
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tbsps fresh lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cumin
Scant $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp turmeric powder

Pinch of cayenne pepper
Salt and pepper to season
1 tbsp oil of choice
8 bamboo skewers
Method

In a medium sized bowl add the garlic, Manawa honey, lemon juice, spices, pepper and salt. Combine well and then add the chicken and turn to cover all the chicken pieces. Cover and rest in fridge for 2 hours.

Soak bamboo skewers in water for 1 hour. About 30 minutes before heating the grill, remove the chicken from the fridge and let sit at room temperature.

Thread the chicken on the skewers, packing tightly together. Grill on bbq over medium heat, turning occasionally until cooked through, about 10 to 15 minutes.

[Manawa Honey Bacon Wrapped Sweet Potato](#)

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Serves 4

Ingredients

4 medium sized Kumara, peeled
8 strips of streaky bacon
2 Tbsp Manawa honey, lightly warmed
2 Tsp lemon juice
Salt and pepper to season
Sour cream (optional)

Directions

Peel and place sweet potatoes in salted cold water and bring to a boil. Turn down to a simmer and cook till just tender to the centre, 10-15 minutes depending on size.

While they are cooking warm the honey so its just runny, take off heat and add the lemon juice and stir to combine.

Drain off the water and replace with cold water to “shock” the sweet potatoes to cool.

Pre-heat oven to 180C.

Season the sweet potato lightly with salt and pepper all over. Starting at one end wrap with the bacon. Secure with tooth picks if required and baste the bacon with the lemon honey and place on a baking tray. Cook in the oven for 20-25 minutes until cooked, basting once after ten minutes with the lemon honey.

Serve hot as a side with sour cream and diced chives if desired.

Recipe developed for Manawa Honey NZ

by Chef Jimmy Boswell

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Manawa Honey Apple Bacon BBQ Sauce



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This is a wonderful semi-sweet honey apple bacon bbq sauce that is ideal to finish a slow roasted pork or lamb shoulder. It also goes well with grilled chicken nibbles.

Many bbq sauces are full of sugar and to me, over sweet. With the yummy fats released with a lamb or pork shoulder these fats combine with the sauce to give a tangy mild sweet finish.

The sauce is also great with sweet, soft cheeses.

- 1/3 cup semisweet honey
- 1 gala apple (cored and cubed)
- 1 granny smith apple (cored and cubed)
- 1/2 large red onion (1/4 inch chop)

125g thick-cut bacon (chopped and cooked)

6 garlic cloves (diced)

2 cups tomato sauce

1/4 cup tomato paste

1/3 cup (80ml) cider vinegar

1/4 cup (60ml) Worcestershire sauce

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

1/2 tablespoon salt

1/2 tsp sumac (use 1 tsp for a tarter flavour) I use Mrs Rogers in NZ

1 tsp horopito powder (optional)

1-2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1-2 cups apple juice



Instructions

In a large pot add the wet ingredients with the bacon, apples, pepper and onion. Cook on med-low heat for 30-40 mins, until the apples and onions have become soft. Add the sumac and Horopito if using and cook for another 10 minutes.

In a blender wizz, the sauce to make it smooth and return to the pot. Add 1-2 cups of apple juice to make the sauce thinner (to your liking) and cook at a simmer for 10 minutes.

Bottle while hot into warm bottles or jars and seal tight. Once opened store in the fridge for up to 1 month.

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by Chef Jimmy Boswell

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Oven Baked Manawa Honey Pork Spare Ribs



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Ingredients

2 tbsp Manawa Honey
2 tsp brown sugar
1/3 cup of olive oil
juice of a lemon
1 tsp salt
2 tsp ground pepper
4 cloves of garlic crushed
2 tsp paprika
2 tbsp oregano
1 tbsp yellow mustard
4 tbsp bbq sauce of choice

1 1.5kg rack of pork ribs

Directions

Preheat oven to 120C degrees.

Mix all of the glaze ingredients together in a large bowl except the bbq sauce, whisk well. Add the pork ribs and massage the glaze all over the pork ribs thoroughly.

Place ribs meat-side down on aluminium foil. Prick back of rib rack several times with a knife.

Generously apply coating of glaze to all sides of rib rack.

With rib rack meat-side down, fold foil around it to create a tight seal. Transfer to large roasting pan.

Bake in preheated oven until tender and cooked through, about 2 hours. Remove and cool 15 minutes.

Increase oven temperature to 175 degrees C.

Open foil, drain and discard any accumulated juices and fat. Brush barbeque sauce on all sides of rack.

Place rack meat-side up and return to oven, leaving foil open. Bake for 10 minutes, remove from oven, and brush another layer of barbeque sauce on meat-side only. Repeat baking and brushing with sauce 3-4 more times, for a total of 50 minutes baking time.

Cut rack into individual rib segments and serve with more barbeque sauce.

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Smoked Fish With Manawa Honey Balsamic Glaze

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Serves 4 as a main

Ingredients

4 medium brown onions, thinly sliced
1/4 cup cooking oil
3/4 cup Manawa Honey Balsamic Glaze
Salt and pepper to season

4 by 200g fillets of smoked fish. I love using smoked Kahawai in this recipe.

Directions

In a saucepan add oil and heat over medium high. When just about smoking add the onions and stir to coat evenly with the oil. Reduce to medium low and caramelize the onions for 15 to 20 minutes, giving it a stir every few minutes. Season with salt and pepper after 10 minutes to taste

Add the Manawa Honey Balsamic Glaze, stir and cook for 2 to 3 minutes or until the mixture is syrupy.

Refrigerate for at least 2 hours in sealed container before using.

In an oven pre-heated to 150 C warm the smoked fish fillets for about 20 minutes or until warm but not roasting. Prepare your choice of sides while the fillets are warming.

In a small pot warm the Manawa Honey Balsamic onion over a low heat till its hot but not boiling. You can add 1-2 tablespoons of water if the Remove from the heat.

Place the warmed smoked fillets on four warmed dinner plates, top with some of the Manawa Honey Balsamic Glaze and serve straight with your preferred sides. Roasted root vegetables such as carrots and parsnips go well with this.

[Roasted Bone Marrow Bacon and Chicken Liver Pate](#)

I just love the sweet buttery flavour of bone marrow and with the addition of some rosemary oil during the roasting for me is a perfect combination.



Roasted Bone Marrow

Ingredients

1/4 cup fresh rosemary leaves, plus 2 rosemary sprigs
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for brushing
Twenty or so 50mm (2-inch) centre-cut beef marrow bones (ask your butcher)
4 rashers smoked streaky bacon, cut into 10mm (1/2in) pieces
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Method



In a mortar, gently pound the rosemary leaves with the 1/4 cup of olive oil to flavour the oil. Transfer the oil to a large bowl. Add the marrow bones and toss to coat. Season the bones with salt and pepper, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

Preheat oven to 180C (390F)

Wrap the marrow bones in foil in 2 packets and add bacon pieces to each and arrange them on a large tray and cook in the oven for 30 minutes. Open the foil packets, stand the bones on their ends on the tray and continue to cook for an additional 15 minutes until the marrow is warmed throughout and starting to sizzle.

Carefully remove the bones from the oven and let them cool down. When cool enough extract the marrow to the bowl of a food processor.

Chicken Liver Pate

Ingredients

100g (8 oz) butter
1 onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tsp fresh thyme leaves, chopped
400g (1 lb.) chicken livers, trimmed and cut in half
1/4 cup of dry Madeira, Sherry or brandy
salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 bay leaf

Method

Remove and discard any sinew or unpleasant-looking parts.

Melt 100g (4 oz) or half of the butter in a pan over a medium heat, then add the onion and fry until softened, but not coloured.

Add the garlic, bay leaf, thyme and chicken livers and fry the livers until golden-brown all over and cooked through, season well with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Add the Madeira to the pan and boil until reduced to a couple of tablespoons. Remove the bay leaf and place the liver mixture and 50g (2 oz) of the remaining butter into a food processor along with the bacon and bone marrow. Blend until smooth. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper and give it another pulse to combine.

Place the puree into six 100g (4-oz) ramekins or 1 serving terrine and smooth the top. Melt the remaining butter and pour on top of each ramekin or serving terrine, then refrigerate until set. Approximately 30 to 40 minutes.

Roasted Beef Bones

I use the roasted beef bones to make a stock.

Batch10 Bourbon Bacon Bun Brunch with BBQ Sauce

Batch10 Bourbon Bacon Bun Brunch with BBQ Sauce



2tbsp B10 bacon onion jam

Recipe

– <http://www.tasteofhome.co.nz/batch-10-bourbon-bacon-jam/>

½ cup B10 barbecue sauce, divided

Recipe

– <http://www.tasteofhome.co.nz/batch10-honey-bourbon-bbq-sauce/>

2 cloves garlic, chopped fine

2 red onions, sliced thinly

2 red peppers, sliced thinly

2 green peppers, sliced thinly

2 yellow peppers, sliced thinly

½ cup ginger beer (or beer of choice)

1tbsp butter, more or less to taste

Salt and pepper to taste

6 pork and fennel sausages, casings removed and lightly diced

Chopped Italian parsley, if desired
rolls or soft buns of choice

Slice up all the vegetables and set aside.

Add a splash of oil in a large, heavy based skillet and over a medium to high heat brown off the sausage meat breaking it up as it cooks. When it is $\frac{3}{4}$ brown add the B10 bacon jam, garlic and combine. Cook for another 10 minutes and once the meat is cooked remove to a bowl saving the juices in the skillet. Place the bowl in a warm oven

Add additional oil if needed, add vegetables and soften them over a medium heat, about 10 minutes. Add the ginger beer, butter, and mix to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Simmer to reduce the liquids by 1/3.

Add the B10 BBQ sauce and combine. Continue to simmer for another 10 minutes.

Lightly toast you buns under the grill in your oven for 1 to 2 minutes to warm then up and give them a bit of colour.

Scoop some of the meat into the base of the buns and top with vegetable. Drizzle with remaining barbecue sauce and dress with some parsley over top of each one.

Batch10 Bourbon Beef Bean Chilli



1/3 cup



Batch10 Honey Bourbon

1 cup chopped onion

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 cup each diced celery and corn kernels

400g beef mince

200g diced bacon

1 tablespoon chili powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon crushed red pepper

2 teaspoons chopped fresh or 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves

1 teaspoon ground cumin

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons brown sugar

1 can diced or crushed tomatoes, undrained

1 cup tomato sauce

1 can red kidney beans, undrained and rinsed

In a medium sized saucepan, brown off the mince and remove from heat. Drain off the liquid and place in a bowl.

In the same saucepan heat the oil and add the onion and stir over medium heat. Once its has started to soften, about 5 minutes add the bacon and garlic. Combine and cook for a further 3-4 minutes stirring occasionally.

Add and stir the chili powder, celery, corn, oregano, cumin,

salt, and red pepper flakes. Cook for another minute or two.

Pour in bourbon to deglaze pan. Use bourbon to scrape up any bits stuck to pan.

Add tomatoes, tomato sauce and brown sugar to pot. Heat the mixture to boiling over high heat. Once mixture is boiling, reduce heat just enough so mixture bubbles gently. Cover with lid and slowly simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.

Stir in the beans and increase the heat to boiling. Once the mixture is boiling, reduce heat just enough so the mixture bubbles gently. Cook uncovered about another 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until desired thickness.

For additional heat add some fresh dices chilli. Serve with chips, chives, sour cream or grated cheese.

Batch10 Honey Bourbon BBQ Sauce



3/4 cup (190ml)



Batch10 Honey Bourbon

1/2 onion, minced fine (grating the onion works well)

4 cloves garlic, minced

2 cups tomato sauce

1/4 cup tomato paste

1/3 cup (80ml) cider vinegar

1/4 cup (60ml) Worcestershire sauce

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

1/2 tablespoon salt

1/2 cup (110g) packed brown sugar

1/3 teaspoon Tabasco sauce, or to taste

In a large saucepan over medium heat on your stove combine the onion, garlic and Batch10.

Simmer for 10 minutes or until onion is soft and translucent. Add the pepper, salt, tomato sauce, tomato paste, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, brown sugar and Tabasco sauce.

Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 20 minutes. Run sauce through a strainer or blitz with a stick blender for a smooth sauce.

Bottle in sterilized glass and store in fridge.