

TAILS & TROTTERS

Basic Sweet Bacon

Time: 30 minutes

5lb Pork Belly, boneless, skin-on

1.5 lbs brown sugar

1 lbs kosher salt

3.5 grams sodium-nitrite/pink salt (Cure #1)

Cure recipe is enough for 25# of belly at an application rate of 1# cure per 10# raw belly

Non-reactive (plastic) tray with lid, or large ziploc bags

1. Mix ingredients well.
2. Rinse belly, and pat dry.
3. If using a tray, liberally coat bottom of tray with curing mixture. Place belly skin-side down in container, and liberally coat the top & sides with more curing mixture. Cover, and place in refrigerator.
4. If using plastic bags, place belly in bag then liberally spread curing mixture on all sides of the belly. Seal, and place in a 2nd bag to help prevent leaking. Place bag in refrigerator on a plate or tray in case of leaking.
5. The length of curing time depends on the thickness of the belly, as well as your personal taste for saltiness. After 24 hours or so, the cure mixture will turn into a brine as it pulls water from the belly. Flip the belly over on the 2nd day on cure. Our cure is formulated for the belly to be on cure for 5 days; if you like your bacon saltier, leave on cure an additional 1-2 days.
6. Curing is complete when the belly is firm, but not hard to the touch (a hard belly will likely be overly salted). Remove from cure, and rinse under cold water. Pat dry.
7. At this point, your belly is cured, and a plethora of finishing options open up to you. The only firm rule is that the belly will slice easiest when frozen. Trim the edges square, and cube into lardons to be used for salads or braises. Coat the outside with cracked pepper before freezing to form a spicy rind, or smoke it briefly.

Because our pork is so rich in hazelnut-oil, the fat has a much lower smoking-point than is typical. The best way to cook cured T&T belly is to lay slices flat on a cooking tray (don't use a cookie sheet or your oven will be a disaster!), and bake at 350° until the desired brown. Keep a close eye on it though - it will burn very quickly!

If you are interested in learning more about meat curing & charcuterie, one of our most treasured resources is Charcuterie, The Craft of Salting, Smoking and Curing by Michael Ruhlman & Brian Polcyn.