
PORK

PORK IS MAINLY EATEN AS A PROCESSED MEAT: BACON, SAUSAGE AND HAMS. ITALIANS HAVE THEIR PANCETTA, THE FRENCH THEIR BOUDIN NOIR, THE SPANISH THEIR CHORIZO AND THE BRITISH THEIR BACON. IN BRITAIN THERE IS A RENEWED INTEREST IN FRESH PORK.

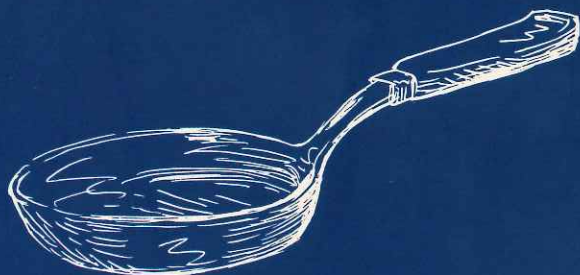
Pork produces a variety of fresh meat from roasts to steaks and even mince for burgers.

There are a number of factors that together give pork its flavour, such as the age, type of feed, sex of the animal and its breed.

Pigs can be reared out or indoor. Outdoor is not always a sign of better welfare in colder or hotter climates as pigs don't like a great variation of temperature.

Despite some religious restriction, pork is one of the most common meats eaten throughout the world and offers a large variety of recipes to both discerning chefs and consumers.

Pork is a very versatile meat. For centuries roast pork and crackling has provided the opportunity for families and friends to gather around the table. Chops are often seen as the prime cuts but there are many other cuts from pork which may be less well known, so ask your butcher for advice. Pork mince is a great favourite with the whole family, especially children. Mince is the base for various popular recipes such as burgers, meatballs and Bolognese. Stewing pork also makes it very versatile, popular all over the world stews offer a large variety of recipes from curries to Stroganoff or casseroles.



QMS

PORK, BACON AND APPLE POPOVERS

Serves: 6 Preparation: 20 minutes Cooking: 25 - 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

For the batter:

125g plain flour

2 eggs

300ml semi-skimmed milk

Vegetable oil, for greasing

For the filling:

225g pork mince

2 rashers back bacon, chopped

1 small leek or onion, chopped

1 small carrot, grated

*1 dessert apple, peeled, cored and
chopped or grated*

2 tbsp fruity chutney i.e. mango chutney

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Make the batter: whisk together the flour, eggs and milk until smooth. A hand blender is good for this.

To make the filling, heat a non-stick pan then stir-fry the mince, bacon, onion and carrot for 5 minutes or until the pork has coloured and becomes crumbly. Reduce the heat and cook for a further 5 minutes. Stir in the apple and chutney.

Using a 12-hole muffin/bun tray or two 4x10cm (4 inch) Yorkshire pudding tins, brush the tins well with oil and place in the oven to preheat for a minute or so.

Pour the batter evenly into the tins; it should fill 6 of the larger holes or all 12 of the smaller.

Divide half the mince mixture between the filled tins and pop back in the oven for 20-30 minutes depending upon their size, or until puffed and golden. Spoon the remaining filling on top of the risen popovers and return to the oven for 5 mins.

Serve immediately with peas or broccoli.

TASTY TIP

Minced beef and lamb are good alternatives and add sweetcorn, diced peppers or mushrooms for variety. A good recipe for using up surplus vegetables!

PORK, LIME LEAF AND PAK CHOI STIR-FRY

Serves: 2 Preparation + Cooking: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

300g lean pork escalope or fillet, cut into strips

2 tsp sesame oil or olive oil

3 shallots, halved and thinly sliced

1 tbsp fresh finely chopped or shredded ginger

4 kaffir leaves, shredded

2 tbsp light soy sauce

2 tbsp white wine or Chinese wine (mirin)

200g baby pak choi, chopped

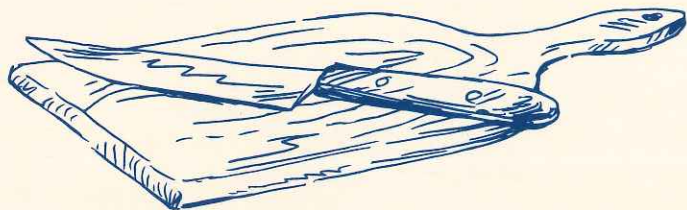
METHOD

Heat the oil in a wok over a high heat. Add the shallots and the pork strips and stir-fry for 3 minutes or until the pork has coloured.

Add the ginger and lime leaves and stir-fry for a further minute.

Add the soy sauce, mirin and pak choi and stir-fry for a further 2-3 minutes or until the pak choi is just tender.

Serve with plain boiled rice.



HAM, LEEK AND MUSHROOM RISOTTO

Serves: 4 Preparation: 5 minutes Cooking: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

200g thick slice of cooked ham, diced
1 litre chicken or vegetable stock
25g butter
1 large leek, sliced thinly
3 - 4 large field mushrooms (approximately 225g), chopped
225g Arborio (risotto) rice
2 tbsp freshly chopped chives or parsley
2 tbsp freshly grated Parmesan cheese
Freshly ground black pepper

METHOD

Gently heat the stock in a saucepan and keep hot over a low heat.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan and add the leek, mushrooms and ham. Cook gently for 2-3 minutes, stirring frequently, until softened and lightly coloured.

Add the rice and cook for a further minute without colouring - it will turn slightly transparent. Then, using a ladle, add the stock in 4 separate additions, simmering gently, and stirring continuously, allowing the rice to absorb each addition of stock each time. During this process the rice will become creamy and tender; this will take approximately 15 minutes.

When the rice is cooked, remove the pan from the heat and stir in the fresh herbs. Season to taste, divide between warm plates and evenly sprinkle on the Parmesan cheese. Serve pronto!

TASTY TIP

For a helping hand to your 5-a-day fruit and vegetable intake, add 100g baby spinach leaves with the last ladle of stock.

SIZZLING SAUSAGE AND BACON SALAD

Serves: 4 Preparation + Cooking: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 4 rashers rindless back bacon,
cut into strips*
- 6 traditional thick pork sausages*
- 1 tbsp olive oil*
- 1 red onion, roughly chopped*
- 2 tbsp wholegrain mustard*
- 1 tbsp light muscovado sugar*
- 20 cherry tomatoes*
- 2 little Gem lettuces*
- 1 large ripe avocado*
- ½ cucumber*
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar*

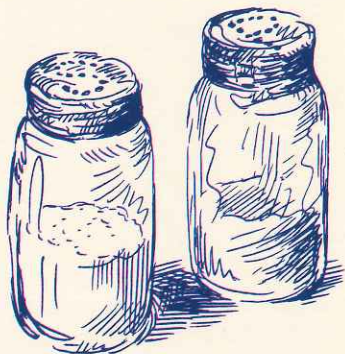
METHOD

Heat the oil in a large wok or frying pan. Squeeze the sausage meat out of its skin into halves straight into the pan. Add the bacon and onion and stir-fry for 5 minutes or until the sausages have browned.

Toss in the mustard, sugar and tomatoes and continue to cook until the mixture is coated in a light glaze and the tomatoes are just beginning to split.

Meanwhile, separate the lettuce leaves, peel, stone and chop the avocado and halve and slice the cucumber. Arrange between 4 plates. Divide the sausage mixture on top.

Return the pan to the heat, add the vinegar and 1 tbsp water. Use a wooden spoon to dislodge any tasty sediment from the pan. Trickle the pan juices over the salads.



PORK AND APPLE BURGERS

Makes: 4 Large or 8 Small Preparation: 10 minutes Cooking: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

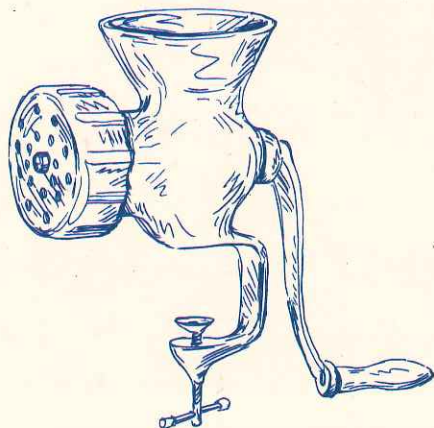
50g pork mince
*1 cooking apple, peeled, cored
and grated*
3 spring onions, chopped
Rind of 1 lemon
1-2 small eating apples
Freshly ground black pepper

METHOD

Mix together the pork, grated apple, onions and lemon rind. Season with black pepper and form into 4 large or 8 small burgers.

Cook under a preheated grill set to medium for 5-7 minutes on each side or until firm to press and cooked through.

Cut the eating apple(s) into 4 slices. Arrange on split wholemeal rolls and top with the burger.



GREEK STYLE PORK MEATBALLS

Makes: 16 Serves: 4 Preparation: 10 minutes Cooking: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

450g pork mince
450g potatoes, peeled and grated
1 large onion, grated or finely chopped
4 slices stale white bread, made into crumbs
3 tbsp freshly chopped mint
2 tbsp freshly chopped parsley
1 egg, beaten
A pinch of ground cinnamon
1 tbsp olive oil

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Grate the potatoes into a large bowl; use your hands to squeeze the potato, removing as much starchy water as possible.

Add the remaining ingredients except the olive oil and combine together well - clean hands are the easiest tools for the job! The mixture should not be too wet - add some more breadcrumbs if necessary.

Form into small ovals the size of the palm of your hand. Heat the oil in a shallow frying pan and fry the meatballs, a few at a time until sealed and lightly coloured. Transfer to a shallow roasting pan, spacing the meatballs out evenly.

Cook in the hot oven for 20 minutes or until nicely browned and cooked through. Enjoy!

TASTY TIP

Use half and half of minced lamb and beef for these meatballs and experiment with other flavours and spices (i.e. lemon zest, chilli, cumin).

GARLIC ROAST PORK WITH APPLE & SAGE MASH

Serves: 4 - 6 Preparation: 10 minutes Cooking: 2 hours 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

2kg loin of pork, chined and rind scored
2 unpeeled garlic bulbs, broken apart
4 garlic cloves cut into slivers
4 baking potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 large cooking apple, peeled, cored and chopped
2 tbsp Greek style yoghurt or crème fraîche
1 tbsp freshly chopped sage (or ½ tsp dried)

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Place the pork in a roasting tin, sitting the joint on the two bulbs of garlic. Tuck the garlic slivers into the scored rind or under the fat.

Roast the pork, calculating the cooking time at 30 minutes per 450g and 30 minutes extra. When cooked, allow the pork to rest for 10 minutes. Slip the backbone out before carving the pork into thick slices.

Meanwhile for the apple and sage mash, cook the potatoes in boiling water until tender. Drain and mash. Gently cook the apples in a drop of water in a small saucepan or microwave until soft. Use a fork to lightly crush as you fold the apples into the potato together with the chopped sage and yoghurt.

To serve, spoon the mash onto warm plates and rest a generous slice of pork alongside.