



Spain on a Plank/Planca al Espania

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A free recipe from my YouTube channel:

[Chef's Apprentice: Learning to Cook Like a Pro One Small Plate at a Time](#)

See photo on Instagram [@chefsapprenticecooklikeapro](#)

I call this preparation Spain on a Plank because it gives your guests a taste of Spanish pintxos, which are slightly-more-than-bite-sized (smaller than tapas) snacks found throughout Spain. They can be eaten as an appetizer, but eating several together can make a meal. I serve this preparation on a wooden plank (such as unused cedar planks used for grilling). If you don't have wooden planks, serve it as Spain on a Plate. (Note: this is not cooking "a la Plancha", which means to grill on a metal plate.)

Makes three types of pintxos for 8 people

1. Roasted Hasselback Potatas Bravas with Roasted Tomato Aioli
2. Braised Pork and Chorizo with Arugula
3. Serrano Ham and Chopped Tomatoes with Green Peppercorns and Olive Oil Pearls

If you are making all three parts of this preparation, **braise**¹ the pork and chorizo mixture early in the day and **keep warm** until ready to serve. **Roast** the potatoes **al a minute**. This procedure makes efficient use of the oven.

Use only fresh (not dried) herbs, except bay leaves, which may be dried.

Roasted Hasselback Potatas Bravas with Roasted Tomato Aioli

7 small potatoes (preferably elongated rather than round, a little smaller than a ping pong ball)
1.5 Tb. parsley, chopped

¹ Bold terms are explained in the Chef's Apprentice Glossary of Term and Techniques at www.chefsapprentice.com.

1.5 Tb. rosemary, finely chopped
 1.5 Tb. thyme, chopped
 1.5 Tb. garlic, minced
 8 oz. unsalted butter, melted
 Kosher salt
 Peppermill

For the **aioli**:

4 Plum or Roma tomatoes, halved
 Olive oil (to oil the sheet pan)
 1 Tb. garlic, chopped
 3 Tb. Mayonnaise (preferably Kraft Light)

1. Preheat oven to 425F. Mix butter, parsley, rosemary, thyme, and garlic. **Keep warm.**
2. Slice the bottom of each potato in the elongated direction to make a flat surface, so the potato will sit flat and stable, without rolling around. Slice as little off of the potato as possible; just enough so that it will sit flat. Place a chopstick (preferably a square chopstick) on both sides of the potato, so the potato is nestled between them. Slice the potato into 1/8" slices along its entire length. The chopsticks stop the knife from slicing all the way through.
3. Gently fan the potatoes and brush herb garlic butter into the slices. **Season.** Spoon a little of the herbs and garlic mixture on top of each potato.
4. Bake 30 minutes, basting after 10 minutes and 20 minutes. **Keep warm** until ready to serve, but only for a short time, so they don't get soggy.
5. At the time of serving, spoon a little more of the herbs and garlic mixture on top of each potato. Serve with roasted tomato aioli on the side.

For the aioli:

1. Roast tomatoes cut side down on an oiled sheet pan 45-60 minutes, until they look nicely roasted and the skins are peeling away on their own. After they cool, remove the skins.
2. **Process** the tomatoes, garlic, and mayonnaise until smooth. Add a little more mayonnaise if the sauce is too runny. Push the aioli through a strainer. Season. Keep cool.

Braised Pork and Chorizo with Arugula

This recipe will make much more braised pork and chorizo than you need. Use the remainder for another purpose.

1.5 lbs. pork shoulder, cut into 1/2" to 3/4" cubes (trim away as much fat as possible)
 4 pork chorizo sausages, sliced into 1/4" coins (try not to tear the casing)
 4 Plum or Roma **tomatoes, skinned, peeled**, seeded, and cut into 3/4" chunks
 4 strips of bacon, **bring to boil, simmer** for 10 minutes, and slice into 1/4" slices
 2 Tb. garlic, chopped

About $\frac{3}{4}$ cup pitted green olives, quartered lengthwise
 $\frac{1}{2}$ bottle red wine
 2 large bay leaves
 Flour (enough to dredge the pork cubes)
 Kosher salt
 Peppermill
 Arugula, chopped a little (the goal is to make it edible with fingers, without tearing it)
 8 baguette slices, $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick, sliced on the bias
 1 Tb. parsley, finely chopped

1. Preheat oven to 300F. Season and **dredge** pork cubes.
2. **Sauté** the coins from 1 sausage in a dry pan until firm and **browned** on both sides (they will release fat, so the pan should not need to be oiled). Don't crowd the pan or overlap the coins. Tend each coin individually. Remove browned chorizo to Dutch oven.
3. **Brown** some of the pork cubes in the oil left from sautéing the chorizo coins. Don't crowd the pan or overlap the cubes. Remove browned pork cubes to the Dutch oven. Repeat this process, sautéing the chorizo coins, then browning the pork cubes, until all of the chorizo has been sautéed and all of the pork cubes have been browned, and both are in the Dutch oven.
4. **Deglaze** the sauté pan with some of the red wine, scraping the bottom to create a **fond**. Add the remaining wine to the sauté pan, **bring to a boil**, and **simmer** about 10 minutes, to cook off the alcohol.
5. Add the following to the Dutch oven: wine and fond from the sauté pan, tomatoes, bacon, garlic, olives, bay leaves. **Season**.
6. **Braise** for 2.5 to 3 hours, until the pork cubes are fall-apart tender. **Keep warm** until ready to serve.
7. **Plate** immediately before serving, to minimize soaking the bread. Top each bread slice with arugula. Use a slotted spoon to top arugula with braised pork and chorizo. Try to avoid getting much juice, which will make the bread soggy. Lightly **garnish** with parsley.

Serrano Ham and Chopped Tomatoes with Green Peppercorns and Olive Oil Pearls

4 Plum or Roma **tomatoes, skinned, peeled**, seeded, and very finely chopped
 10 slices of Serrano ham, chopped
 8 baguette slices, $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick, sliced **on the bias**
 Sea salt
 Green peppercorns in a peppermill
 Olive oil pearls

1. Place the chopped tomatoes in a strainer and allow them to drain over a bowl for about 1 hour.

2. **Plate** immediately before serving, to minimize soaking the bread. Top each bread slice with ham. Top ham with tomatoes. Lightly sprinkle with salt and a light grind of green peppercorns. **Garnish** with garlic pearls.