

Pu-erh Coffee-Rubbed Bacon

1 lb pork belly, skin removed

1/4 C brewed strong Pu-erh coffee, cooled

1/4 C brown sugar

1 T kosher salt

1 t black pepper

1 t smoked paprika

1/2 t ground cumin

1 t pink curing salt (Prague Powder #1, sodium nitrite)

PREPARE THE CURE:

In a bowl, combine the brewed Pu-erh coffee, brown sugar, kosher salt, black pepper, smoked paprika, ground cumin, and pink curing salt. Mix well until the sugar and salts are dissolved.

MARINATE THE PORK BELLY:

Place the pork belly in a shallow dish or a resealable plastic bag. Pour the cure mixture over the pork belly, ensuring it is well coated. Seal the bag or cover the dish and refrigerate for 5 days, turning daily to ensure even curing.

DRY THE PORK BELLY:

After curing, remove the pork belly from the marinade and pat it dry with paper towels. Place the pork belly on a wire rack set over a baking sheet and let it air dry in the refrigerator for another 24 hours. This helps develop the desired texture and allows the flavors to concentrate.

BAKE:

Preheat oven to 200°F. Place the venison belly on a wire rack over a baking sheet and bake for 1 hour, or until the internal temperature reaches 150°F.

COOL AND SLICE:

Let the bacon cool completely before slicing.

STORE FOR LATER:

Place the sliced bacon in a resealable plastic bag or an airtight container. Store in the refrigerator for up to a week or freeze for up to three months.