

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 24-48 hours, turning occasionally 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 12-24 hours. This helps develop the desired texture and allows the flavors to concentrate.

SLICE THE BACON:

Once the pork belly has dried, slice it into bacon strips.

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 longer storage.