

Matilda, Maple, and Garlic Pork Shoulder with Crispy Skin

By ENunn (Writer in Chicago)



Ingredients:

- **6-8** lbs. bone-in, skin on pork shoulder
- **3** Tablespoons fennel seeds, toasted, crushed
- **14** garlic cloves, crushed
- **3** Tablespoons kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Cup olive oil
- **1** teaspoon cayenne pepper
- **1** teaspoon black pepper
- $\frac{3}{4}$ Cup grade maple syrup
- **1** big bottle of Matilda, or another malty fruity ale
- **2** teaspoons malt vinegar

Directions:

1. After allowing the meat to come to room temperature, use a sharp knife to score the skin, making $\frac{1}{2}$ inch stripes over entire surface. Preheat oven to 450. Toast fennel seeds in a skillet over medium heat, until fragrant (3 minutes); crush using mortar and pestle, set aside. Place garlic and salt in empty mortar and grind together to make a paste. Slowly add olive oil, then sprinkle in cayenne, black pepper, and fennel.
2. Rub about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the paste over the skinless side of the meat, then place skin side down on a roasting pan in lower third of oven. Cook for 30 minutes. Meanwhile stir the syrup and vinegar into the remaining paste.
3. Turn the oven down to 225. Carefully flip the shoulder (use a clean towel), then use a rubber spatula to spread the remaining paste over the shoulder, pushing it into the scored skin.

4. Return to oven and cook for 18 hours or longer (you can put it in the oven at bedtime and leave it in until you serve it as an early supper the next day, which is what I did; I just turned it all the way down to 150 for a couple of hours late in the afternoon), pouring 1/3 of the bottle of beer over it at several intervals, and basting with the drippings 2-3 times. Seriously. Before serving, turn up the heat to 450 for ten minutes if the skin is not crispy enough. Put it on a platter, and let people pull off pieces, like wild animals. They will fight over the skin.

Serves 4-8