Roast Suckling Pig: Lechon Asado

Summary

Yield: 20
Source: Mark Martinez and Magali Leiseca
Prep Time: 24 hours

Description

This is the basic recipe for the Noche Buena pig.

Ingredients

- 5 cups sour orange juice (or a mixture of 50/50 sweet orange and lime juice)
- 2 tbsps salt
- 2 tbsps freshly ground pepper
- 3 tbsps cumin
- 3 tbsps dried oregano
- 3 large garlic heads, peeled
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 pig (figure 1 to 1.5 lbs. per person)

Instructions

Place the pig in a large pan, belly up.

Mix the salt, pepper, oregano, cumin with the oil and rub it into the meat.

Insert the garlic clives into the meat, carefully separating the muscle tissue.

Pour the juice over the meat and let marinate overnight.

Roast the pig, uncovered, in a 200° F oven for 9 1/2 hours, basting every hour. If you use the Caja China, follow their cooking instructions which are quite different and result in a shorter cooking time.

Check to see if the skin is crispy and golden. If not, raise the overn temperature to 350° F and roast for 30 minutes more. The pig will be done when a meat thermometer registers 170° F. You can also test donness by pricking the thigh with the point of a knife after 9 1/2 hours; when the liquid runs clear, the meat is done.

Remove the pig from the oven and allow it to rest for at least 10 minutes before carving.