

Gourmet

Braised Bacon

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon Peanut Oil.....
- 2 pounds Pork Belly, skin on.....
- 1 Onion, peeled and coarsely chopped.....
- 2 Carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped.....
- 2 Celery Stalks, peeled and coarsely chopped.....
- 1 Leek, white part only, trimmed and chopped.....
- 2 Garlic Cloves, peeled.....
- 3 cups Brown Chicken Stock.....
- Kosher Salt.....
- Freshly Ground Black Pepper.....

PREPARATION

- Heat oven to 350° F. Heat the Peanut Oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium heat until the oil slides easily across the pan. Salt and pepper the Bacon and add it, fat side down, to the skillet. Cook until the skin is browned, about 15 minutes, then transfer the Bacon to a plate.
- Pour off all but about 2 tablespoons of fat and add the Onion, Carrots, Celery, Leek, and Garlic to the skillet. Cook the vegetables, stirring occasionally, until they are tender and beginning to brown, about 20 minutes. Return the Bacon to the skillet, fat side up, and add about 2 cups of Brown Chicken Stock (it should surround but not cover the meat). Bring the stock to a simmer, then transfer the skillet to the oven. Gently simmer the Pork Belly, uncovered, for 1 hour, then add another cup of Brown Chicken Stock. Continue cooking until the Bacon is tender enough to cut with a fork, about 1 hour longer.
- Allow the Bacon to cool in the braising liquid. Remove the Bacon from the liquid, then gently lift off and discard the skin (use a small knife to separate any pieces that don't come away from the fat easily). Score the fat, making crosshatch incisions, then cut the Bacon into 4 equal pieces.
- Increase the oven to 400° F. Strain the braising liquid, discarding the solids. Return the liquid to the skillet, bring it to a simmer, and skim off the fat. Return Bacon, fat side up to the skillet. Transfer the skillet to the oven and cook, without basting, until the Bacon is heated through and the fat nicely browned, about 20 minutes. Serve the Bacon in a shallow bowl moistened with a bit of braising liquid.

SERVES 4.