



# Go whole hog

The king of meat Richard Turner shares his love of all things porcine

RICHARD TURNER



I have been fascinated by pork all my life. Like many people, I grew up on pork sausages, bacon and ham, with big old joints of roast pork at the weekend, memories of my mother cooking the Sunday roast, the smell enveloping the whole house, and the crackling, ohhh the crackling... Fast forward 15 years and I'm working long hours, with only Sundays off, in top Michelin-starred-to-the-hilt restaurants and am deluded enough at this point to fancy myself as a bit of a chef. Ten years later and I have joined Hawksmoor, the London steakhouse where cooking is simple, relying on the quality of the produce. They have strong links with their butcher/farmer, Tim Wilson of The Ginger Pig, and during countless trips to his farm, I finally taste the roast of my memories – Tamworth pork roasted in Tim's farmhouse kitchen, with a deep meaty porkiness, crispy crunchy crackling and translucent wobbly fat. It is an epiphany. Later I meet Tom Adams, a young lad cooking up a storm in a van on the south bank of the Thames in London and we plot to open Pitt Cue Co. in Soho. Four beautiful Middle Whites duly arrive, and run free in Pitt Woods, handfed and cared for by Tom. It's here that I fall in love with pigs, and when the day comes for those Middle Whites to make their final journey, they must be the most loved and cared for pigs in England. The meat of this marvellous beast can be

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## Pot Roast Pork with Fennel, Olives, Oranges & Oregano

Although not particularly authentic, this braise was inspired by stews I've eaten in Ibiza and is redolent of a hot Iberian summer. Fiona Beckett, a long time oenophile and dispenser of sage advice, recommends a glass or two of Santa Maria del Camí Binissalem from neighbouring Mallorca

### SERVES 4

1.5kg boned and rolled pork shoulder

Maldon sea salt flakes

50ml olive oil

2 onions, halved through the root

2 fennel bulbs, halved through the root

4 garlic cloves, sliced

200ml dry white wine

1 litre pork broth or stock

200ml fresh orange juice

400g can chopped tomatoes

100g pitted green olives

2 large oranges, segmented

2 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves

hot smoked paprika, for dusting (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C. Score the skin of the pork with a sharp knife, making small incisions 2cm apart, then rub the skin with salt. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large flameproof casserole over a medium heat. Add the onions and fennel and cook for 10 minutes until just softened and golden. Add the garlic and cook for a further 2 minutes.

1. Add the white wine and reduce by half. Pour in the stock, bring to the boil and reduce by half, then add the orange juice and tomatoes. Sit the pork in the vegetables and place in the oven, uncovered, for 40 minutes. Add the olives, then cook for a further 20 minutes until the pork is cooked through.

1. Turn the oven off, add the orange segments and oregano and allow to rest in the oven for 30 minutes before transferring to a chopping board to carve. Serve the pork along with the vegetables, olives and orange segments, drizzled with a spoonful of the pan juice. The lightest dusting of hot smoked paprika at the end adds a lovely warming character.

## TOP TIP

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## Mortadella & Prosciutto Meatballs

These are from Italy by way of Little Italy, by which I mean that while the ingredients might be Italian, these are more likely American. There's a great scene in *The Godfather* where Clemenza teaches Michael to make meatballs with spaghetti sauce... 'Come over here, kid, learn something. You never know, you might have to cook for twenty guys someday. You see, you start out with a little bit of oil. Then you fry some garlic. Then you throw in some tomatoes, tomato paste, you fry it; you make sure it doesn't stick. You get it to a boil, you shove in your sausage and your meatballs, huh? And a little bit of wine. And a little bit of sugar, and that's my trick.'

4 slices of white bread, crusts removed, cut into 1cm cubes
250ml milk
120g Mortadella, chopped
120g Air-cured Ham or prosciutto, chopped
120g minced pork
120g Parmesan cheese, grated, plus extra to serve
2 large free-range eggs, beaten
1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
Maldon sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper
50ml extra virgin olive oil
1 onion, halved
1 carrot, halved
1 chilli, halved
5 garlic cloves, very thinly sliced
1kg canned tomatoes
1 faggot of herbs, made with thyme, rosemary, bay and oregano
Pasta, to serve

**1.** In a small bowl, combine the bread and milk and leave to stand for 10 minutes. Drain, discarding any milk that hasn't been absorbed by the bread. In a food processor, combine the mortadella and prosciutto and pulse until the meat is coarsely ground.

**X.** Transfer to a large mixing bowl and combine with the minced pork, Parmesan, eggs and bread. Add the nutmeg and season well with salt and pepper. Mix gently by hand until just combined, then let the mixture rest in the refrigerator for 1 hour.

**X.** Form into 12 golfball-sized meatballs and return them to the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Heat half the olive oil in a large lidded flameproof casserole. Add the onion, carrot, chilli and garlic and fry until the garlic is translucent – about 5 minutes.

**X.** Add the canned tomatoes and

the faggot of herbs, cover with the lid and place in the oven for 30 minutes.

**X.** In a large, nonstick skillet, heat the rest of the oil over a medium-high heat. Add the meatballs and fry, turning occasionally, until browned on all sides – about 10 minutes.

**X.** Remove the tomato sauce from the oven, add the meatballs, and return the casserole to the oven, uncovered, until the meatballs are cooked through – about 20 minutes. Remove from the oven, discard the onion, carrot and herbs, and serve with pasta and grated Parmesan

## Slow-Roast Leg of Pork with rhubarb ketchup

The medieval English favoured fruit with meat, and served fruit sauces with pork, lamb and even beef. Over the centuries apples have become synonymous with pork, but rhubarb works equally well.

### SERVES 4

2 fennel bulbs, trimmed and roughly chopped

2 carrots, roughly chopped

2 onions, roughly chopped

1 bunch of fresh thyme

1 head of garlic, split in half

2 teaspoons black peppercorns

2 teaspoons fennel seeds

20g Maldon sea salt flakes

1 large leg of pork

pork dripping or lard

500ml cider

500ml Master Pork Broth

100g unsalted butter

### For the rhubarb ketchup

500g forced rhubarb, pink stems only

150g fruit sugar

100ml cider vinegar

1 spice bag, made with ½ cinnamon stick, 2cm piece fresh root ginger, 2 cloves, 8 black peppercorns

50ml orange juice

A pinch of Maldon sea salt flakes

**1.** Preheat the oven to 200C. Put the roughly chopped vegetables into a large roasting tray with the thyme and garlic. Crush the black peppercorns and fennel seeds with the sea salt in a pestle and mortar until fine. Score the pork all over with a sharp knife, rub the skin with pork dripping, then rub with the crushed seasoning mix. Place the pork on the vegetables and roast for 20–30 minutes, or until it's beginning to colour, then turn the temperature down to 120C and continue to cook for 9–12 hours until the meat is soft and you can pull it apart easily with a fork. Pour the cider and pork broth into the roasting tray and let it cook for



another hour, then remove from the oven, transfer the pork to a clean dish and let it rest for 30 minutes. Bring the liquid in the roasting tray to a gentle simmer and whisk in the butter to thicken it. Pass it through a fine sieve and serve with the pork, alongside

rhubarb ketchup.

To make the rhubarb ketchup, place all the ingredients in a stainless steel pan and bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook for 20 minutes. Remove the spice bag and blend the sauce to a

smooth puree. Pass through a fine sieve, place in sterilized bottles and jars, and refrigerate until needed.

## On the Bottle

### There's no place like Rome for caffeine and cocktails

DAMIAN BARR



In Rome it is entirely possible to drink steadily from mid-morning until moments before you fall into bed, fall being the operative word. It's not just possible, but permissible, encouraged even. On a recent weekend away, I rested tipsy in the shadow of the Colosseum and realised this is how thousands of years of empire finally ended. The ensuing Dark Ages were really an extended hangover.

When in Rome drink as the Romans drink.

Breakfast, for me, is coffee, and here that means cappuccino. Order one any time after midday and watch the barista look down his Roman nose. So far, so sober. After an exhausting morning of emperors, you need a pick-me-up. Caffè corretto is an espresso with a shot of grappa or sambuca in. Down it, don't sip. This bolts you through to lunch — ideally a pizza as thin as a communion wafer. Wash it down with pecorino — not the cheese. This little-known white wine is as seemingly delicate and surprisingly strong as a bird's nest. It's pale in the glass but very much there — think pinot grigio with personality. Pecorino grapes hail from Le Marche where they grow in bunches shaped like the head of sheep (*pecora*). Or so the story goes.

After your post-lunch limoncello, you just have time for a nap before cocktails. Whether posing by a grand bar in a five-star palace on Via Veneto or propping up a nook in Trastevere, order an Americano. Invented in Milan by Gaspare Campari, it's half Campari, half red vermouth and a splash of soda water with a slice of lemon. Aperitif heaven.

Staggering on to dinner... another wine we don't yet know well here but should be Sagrantino di Montefalco — a big red from a hilltop town in Umbria, a short train ride from Rome. I've been there and it's charming with red-tiled roofs and nightingales singing in the orchards. They make very little and (wisely) keep most of it for themselves, so it tends to be pricey. Garnet red, it's subtly spicy and quietly rich: a clean-shaven, middle-aged widower in a serge blue suit. Order it and bask in rare approval from the waiter.

Now, for your nightcap? Another Caffè corretto? ■

THREE  
OF THE  
BEST

CONTESA  
PECORINO 2014  
IGT COLLINE  
PESCARESI

Lemony and suggestive of spring blossom.

£9.99, *Majestic*

BAIOCCHI  
MONTEFALCO  
SAGRANTINO

Wild loganberries and sun-ripened blackberries pack this broad-shouldered but not brutal Umbrian.

£16.99 *Waitrose*

ESPRESSO  
MARTINI

Makes two glasses. 50ml Kahua, 50ml Italian espresso (cool it first!), 100ml vodka. Shake with ice until you can't feel your hands. Serve in a chilled glass garnished with a coffee bean



## Croque Monsieur

I first ate this classic French sandwich as staff food in the iconic restaurant Le Gavroche in London. I've gone for Comté cheese here because I prefer it, but use your favourite. Variations on this theme are legion, but I've included a few below that I quite like the sound of.

SERVES XXX

20g unsalted butter, plus extra for spreading

20g plain flour

100ml hot milk

8 slices of Comté cheese, plus 50g grated Comté

grated nutmeg

Maldon sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

8 slices of white bread

Dijon mustard, for spreading

4 thick slices of really good cooked ham

**1.** Melt the butter in a saucepan and stir in the flour to make a roux. Cook for 1 minute, then gradually whisk in the hot milk, a little at a time, until smooth. Simmer for a few minutes until thickened, then add the grated Comté cheese and stir until melted. Grate in a little nutmeg and season lightly.

**2.** Preheat the grill. Brush one side of each slice of bread liberally with butter, then toast. Spread the untoasted sides of the bread with Dijon mustard and put the ham on top, followed by the Comté slices.

**3.** Place under the grill for 1 minute, or until the cheese has melted. Top with the rest of the bread, with the toasted side uppermost, and spread with the cheese sauce. Grill until golden and bubbling, then serve immediately