

# Smoked Maple-Espresso Bacon

Prep 25 m • Cook 7 d • Makes About 5 pounds • Source [Leitesculinaria.com](http://Leitesculinaria.com)

## Ingredients

- 5 to 6 pounds skinless pork belly (make sure the pork belly is trimmed to an even thickness and doesn't taper at the ends)
- 1/4 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 1/4 cup kosher salt
- 1/4 cup instant espresso powder
- 2 teaspoons Insta-Cure Salt #1, also known as Prague Powder #1 or Curing Salt #1
- 1 1/2 tablespoons freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup water
- Hickory or applewood sawdust, chips, chunks, or bisquettes

## Directions

1. Rinse and pat the pork belly dry. Trim any scraggly edges so the pork belly forms a neat rectangle. Save the scraps for sausage, if desired. (Who in his right mind doesn't desire sausage?)
2. In a medium bowl, mix the brown sugar, maple syrup, salt, espresso powder, curing salt, pepper, and enough water to make a sludgy mess. Using your hands, slather the mixture all over the pork belly, turning to coat all sides. Slip the floppy belly into a large resealable plastic bag and seal it. Fit the belly, in its bag, into a baking dish and then slide the whole thing into the fridge. Refrigerate for 7 days, making sure to flip the bag and massage the liquid that accumulates in the bag into the pork belly once a day.
3. After 7 days, remove the pork belly from the bag, rinse it thoroughly under cool running water, and pat it lightly dry. Set up your smoker, charcoal grill, or gas grill for hot smoking using sawdust, chips, chunks, or Bradley bisquettes.
4. Smoke the meat in your smoker at 150 until the internal temperature of the bacon registers 110°F (65°C), Remove the bacon from the smoker and slice off ski. and let it rest until it's cool enough to handle.
5. Wrap and place in fridge overnight. Freeze for an hour to slice.