

# Braised Pork Belly - Hong Shao Rou (红烧肉)



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4.75 from 4 votes

## Ingredients

- 1 kg of pork belly
- 3-4 inches of ginger
- 10-12 scallions
- 5-6 cloves of garlic
- 1 tsp of Sichuan peppercorns
- 2 pieces of dried red chilies
- 1 small piece of cinnamon stick
- 1/4 of a nutmeg
- 1 star anise
- 2-3 tbsp of Chinese cooking wine for blanching
- 2.5 tbsp of sugar
- 2-3 cups of water
- 4 tbsp of soy sauce
- 4 tbsp of chine cooking wine for braising
- 1/3 tsp of salt
- Add more sugar to taste I used 1.5 tsp
- Blanched baby bok choy

## Instructions

1. Cut 1kg of skin-on pork belly into 1.5 inches by 2 inches cuboids. The length that is parallel with the muscle grains should be 2 inches. The width that is across the muscle grains should be 1.5 inches. That way, you will end up with perfect pork cubes after it is cooked.
2. Fill a pot with cold water. Add the pork belly, the root and the top messy parts of the green onion, 6-8 slices of ginger, and a drizzle of Chinese cooking wine. If you can't cook with alcohol, you can throw in a few pieces of orange peel here.
3. Turn the heat to high and bring the pot to a boil. Skim the scum by using a fine sieve. Fish out the aromatics and discard them. Take the pork out. Make sure you drain out all the liquid. This is important because we will sear the pork slightly, and any moisture will make the oil splatter. Set it aside
4. Cut 10-12 scallions in half. Slice 2-3 inches of ginger into thin pieces. Place the scallion and the ginger slices at the bottom of a clay pot. If you don't have a clay pot, a dutch oven will work just as well. Later on, we will simmer the pork in this

- pot. The pork can get burned easily due to the high collagen content, and it can stick to the bottom, so a layer of aromatics will help to prevent that.
5. I reserved 3 stalks of the white part of the scallions and 6 slices of ginger on the side. Roughly dice the scallions. Crush 5-6 cloves of garlic and peel them. Put everything in a bowl. Besides that, you want to gather some spices: 1 tsp of Sichuan peppercorns, 2 pieces of dried red chilies, A small piece of cinnamon stick, 1/4 of a nutmeg, 1 star anise. I put them all together because they will go into the wok at the same time.
  6. Turn the heat to medium-low. Add all the pork into the wok, then stir it for 5-6 minutes. Render a little bit of fat out and slightly char the pork. Toss in all the aromatics and stir them for a few minutes or until fragrant.
  7. Turn off the heat. Transfer the pork and the aromatics into the clay pot. Put the pork skin side down because that is how the skin can get that beautiful red color.
  8. Leave a little bit fat in the wok. Add the sugar and stir constantly. Once it turned into dark amber color, pour in 3 cups of water and bring the pot to a boil.
  9. Pour the caramelized sugar liquid into the clay pot along with 4 tbsp of Chinese cooking wine and 4 tbsp of soy sauce. Place a small plate on top of the pork and simmer it for 1.5 hours.
  10. 1.5 hours later, turn off the heat. Remove the little plate. Pick out all the scallion and ginger. Give it a taste to adjust the flavor. I do need to add 1/3 tsp of salt and 1.5 tsp of sugar here.
  11. For plating, I like to serve it with some blanched baby bok choy, which is really simple. You just add some salt and oil to the water and cook the baby bok choy for about 20 seconds. They are great to balance the fattiness of the pork belly. The pork is so delicate that I have to transfer them to the bowl individually so I don't break them.
  12. Use a sieve to remove all the spices from the sauce. Check how much sauce you have left. If you have too much, you can reduce it a little bit. Pour the sauce over the pork belly and top with a little bit of scallion.
  13. Enjoy!