



Carnitas

Classic Beer- and Citrus-Braised Fried Pork

Serves 8



Jason Varney

The meat is twice cooked: slowly braised in the oven in a super-rich broth, then quickly fried on the stovetop—so you end up with superbly tender caramelized chunks of pork finished with lime and cilantro. You can do the braising step up to 2 days in advance; store the meat in the refrigerator along with the braising liquid, the fry shortly before serving

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INGREDIENTS

BRAISED PORK

- 6 lbs boneless pork shoulder
- 2 quart vegetable oil
- ½ cup lard
- 10 fresh garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 Spanish onions, chopped
- 2 (14-oz) cans sweetened condensed milk
- 2 (12-oz) bottles Mexican lager
- 1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
- 2 navel oranges, peel left on, quartered
- 2 bay leaves (preferably fresh)
- 2 tsp black peppercorns
- 10 sprigs thyme
- 20 whole allspice berries
- 10 whole cloves
- ½ cup salt

CARNITAS

- ¼ cup oil
- 2 red onions, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup minced garlic (12 to 16 cloves)
- ½ cup fresh cilantro
- 2 Tbsp freshly squeezed lime juice (about ½ lime)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

PREPARATION

TO BRAISE THE PORK, combine all the ingredients for the braised pork in a large roasting pan. Cover the pan snugly with aluminum foil and roast for 3 hours.

Take the pan out of the oven and allow the meat to rest in the braising liquid for 15 minutes. (At this point, the meat can be refrigerated in the braising liquid for up to 2 days.) Transfer the meat to a large platter or rimmed baking sheet and discard the braising liquid and solids. When the meat is cool enough to handle, gently pull it apart into large pieces with your fingers.

TO FINISH THE CARNITAS, heat the oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers. Add the shredded pork, onions, and garlic and cook the meat to crisp it on one side, 1 to 2 minutes (it will happen quickly). Carefully turn the pork (beware of spattering oil) and add the cilantro and lime juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper.