REVERSE-SEAR · MEDIUM

Reverse-Sear Presa Ibérica on the Kamado, Pink at 63 °C

A 700 g presa ibérica, pink at 63 °C, the way I cook it on my Big Green Egg Large: indirect at 115 °C over the deflector to 56 °C, a three-minute direct sear, and a pimentón de la Vera rub made in a mortar that goes on last.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
20 min	60 min	4	115 °C

Ingredients

- **1 ud** whole presa ibérica, acorn-fed (bellota) or free-range (cebo de campo), 600-800 g
- **2 cdta** pimentón de la Vera (one sweet, one bittersweet)
- **2 ud** garlic cloves
- **1 cdta** dried oregano
- **1 cda** sherry vinegar
- **10 g** coarse salt
- **1 cdta** whole cumin seeds
- **0.5 cdta** black peppercorns
- **4 cda** extra virgin olive oil
- **1 puñado** chopped fresh parsley and salt flakes, to serve

Method

1 SALT AN HOUR AHEAD

Take the presa out of the fridge an hour ahead, pat it dry with kitchen paper and salt both sides with the coarse salt. Leave it uncovered on a rack: the salt dissolves, draws back in and the surface dries, which is what later lets the sear brown instead of steam. Do not trim the outer fat; it renders during the indirect phase and protects the meat.

2 LIGHT THE EGG FOR INDIRECT

Fill the firebox of the Big Green Egg Large with Jealous Devil white quebracho charcoal up to the line where the firebox meets the fire ring, no higher, and light it in a single spot. Once the flame has caught, fit the ConvEGGtor legs up, the grate on top, and close the dome. Bottom vent open a finger's width and chimney barely open until it settles at 110-120 °C; wait for the smoke to run clean before the meat goes in.

3 MAKE THE RUB IN THE MORTAR

Peel the garlic and pound it in the mortar with the cumin, the pepper and a pinch of salt until you have a paste; a heavy marble mortar like the 18 cm H&H keeps the seeds inside rather than spitting them out. Add the paprika and the oregano, and bind with the oil and the sherry vinegar in a thin stream. Set it aside at room temperature: it goes on at the end, after the sear, never before.

4 INDIRECT COOK TO 55-57 °C

Set the presa in the centre of the grate, fat side up, and close the dome. At 110-120 °C a 700 g piece takes between 35 and 50 minutes. At 30 minutes open up, probe from the side towards the centre with the DOQAUS instant-read thermometer, read and close straight away; repeat every 5-8 minutes. Move it to a board as soon as it reads 55-57 °C at the thickest point.

5 REMOVE THE DEFLECTOR AND CLIMB TO 250 °C

Tent the presa loosely with foil. Wearing barbecue gloves, lift out the grate and the ConvEGGtor, put the grate back and open the bottom vent and the chimney fully. While the dome of the Egg climbs to 250-275 °C on the charcoal already lit, pat the surface of the presa dry with kitchen paper: any moisture steals heat from the sear and delays the crust.

6 SEAR WITH BURPING

Before opening above 250 °C, burp the lid: lift it five centimetres, wait about five seconds and open fully. Presa on the grate, close, 60-90 seconds per side, plus a short second turn of 30-45 seconds per side: 3-4 minutes in total. Probe with the DOQAUS: between 63 and 65 °C it is at the pink point I choose for ibérico. If you prefer it well done, do not stretch the sear: pull the presa from the indirect phase at 63-65 °C and sear exactly the same; it will reach 71 °C.

7 SPREAD THE RUB AND REST

Move the presa to the board and, with the meat still sizzling, coat both sides with the rub from the mortar using the back of a spoon. The residual heat melts the oil and opens up the paprika without toasting it, which is what would turn it bitter. Cover loosely with foil and rest five minutes: the internal temperature climbs a degree or two and the juices settle.

8 SLICE ACROSS THE GRAIN

Look at the direction of the fibres, which in a presa run diagonally across the piece, and cut perpendicular to them in one-centimetre slices with a long, sharp knife. The centre should be pink and moist, not red or grey. Serve on the same board, with whatever rub has run off spooned over, a few salt flakes and the chopped parsley.

Editor's tips

- The 63-65 °C is a choice for acorn-fed or free-range presa ibérica with a clear origin; with presa from white pork or of doubtful provenance, take the piece to 71 °C without hesitation: you lose a little juice, not the recipe.
- Do not try to leave a wired probe in place: the presa measures 3-4 cm at its thickest and the tip would poke out the far side, reading hot air. Go in from the side with the instant-read thermometer and take your hand away; the DOQAUS does not stay inside with the lid shut.
- If the presa comes vacuum-packed, open it the day before and leave it uncovered in the fridge on a rack: a dry surface sears better and the packaged smell disperses.
- The rub takes variations without losing its point: half a teaspoon of hot paprika instead of bittersweet, or lemon zest added at the end. What does not change is the timing: always after the sear, never over direct heat.

Gear for this recipe

Big Green Egg Large

It is the kamado I cook this presa on, so I am describing what I see on my own patio: the Large has a 46 cm grate, ample room for an 800 g presa with free grate around it to move it aside if one side is browning too fast. What matters in a reverse-sear is that the same appliance does two things in a row: hold 110-120 °C with the deflector in for forty minutes, then climb to 250-275 °C as soon as you take it out and open the vents. The Egg's thick ceramic and two vents allow that without adding charcoal. The technique works just as well on any ceramic kamado of similar size; what changes is the deflector and the climb times.

mikamado.es/en/kamados/big-green-egg-large

Jealous Devil 100% White Quebracho lump charcoal 15.8 kg

White quebracho is a very dense wood and its charcoal, in large lumps, burns slowly with little flame, which is what a reverse-sear asks for: in the indirect phase, with the vents nearly closed, a light charcoal would go out or give temperature spikes; a charcoal as dense as Jealous Devil's should hold a compact bed and reach the 250 °C sear with live coals, no top-up needed. The 15.8 kg bag is large for someone who cooks one presa a month, and makes sense for anyone lighting the kamado every weekend. It is a resin-free hardwood, so it adds no resinous smoke to compete with the pimentón de la Vera in the rub.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/jealous-devil-quebracho-lump-charcoal

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Big Green Egg ConvEGGtor plate setter (Large)

It is the official deflector for the Egg Large and sits in its fire ring without adapters, something worth checking with any generic deflector. Legs up, it supports the standard grate and turns the fire into a convection oven: it blocks direct radiant heat and lets only hot air through, which is what keeps the presa at 110-120 °C without the underside toasting ahead of time. It is ceramic, so it stores heat and has to come out with gloves for the searing phase. For other kamados, the maker's own deflector does the same job; the ConvEGGtor is not interchangeable.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/bge-conveggtor-large

DOQAUS instant-read thermometer, folding probe, 3-second read

The presa is too thin for a wired leave-in probe: the tip would poke out the far side and read hot air. A folding instant-read like the DOQAUS is the right tool: it goes in from the side, the manufacturer quotes a 3-second reading, and the kamado lid is open for the shortest possible time. It is used at 30 minutes into the indirect phase and then every 5-8, and once more after the sear to confirm the 63-65 °C, which is where a three-degree difference changes the dish. It does not stay inside the kamado with the lid shut: it is not built for that, and it is the accessory used most often in this recipe.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/doqaus-termometro-instantaneo-plegable

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H&H Mortaio: 18 cm white marble mortar with pestle

The rub in this recipe is made by pounding, not blending: the garlic and the whole cumin have to break down to a paste so the paprika and oil can bind them. An 18 cm marble mortar like the H&H has the weight and the rough surface that calls for; light ceramic ones skate across the worktop and the seeds jump out. The diameter is more than enough for the quantities for one presa and falls short if you want to make romesco for eight. It cleans with hot water and a brush, no soap. It is the tool that turns the rub into a paste that clings to hot meat instead of sliding off.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/hh-mortero-marmol-blanco-18cm

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/presa-iberica-reverse-sear-kamado

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