



SPANISH · IBÉRICO TRADITION · PRECISION-FIRE HYBRID · MAIN · CENTERPIECE · SATURDAY SERVICE

Preso Ibérica · SV 57°C / 4h → Fire Finish 45 seconds

The shoulder cut of the Ibérico pig — a lesser-known muscle with the marbling of wagyu and the flavor of the best pork ever farmed — cooked sous-vide at 57°C for 4 hours to achieve uniform medium-rare through the entire thick cut, then finished over live fire at maximum heat for a mere 45 seconds per side. The result: mahogany crust over ruby-pink interior, fat rendered just enough to be silky, with the unmistakable Ibérico nuttiness intact. Sliced across the grain, served with just flake salt and a drizzle of good oil. Saturday night centerpiece, 4 hours unattended, dinner on the table in 5 minutes once the fire is hot.

Protein Preso Ibérica (Ibérico pork shoulder cut)

Serves 4 - 6 as main · ~ 800 g trimmed yield per 1 kg raw

Difficulty Intermediate

Active 25 min active (plus 4 h unattended SV, plus 10 min fire ramp)

Total 4 h 30 min

The Cut No One Knows, From the Pig Everyone Worships

Presas are Spanish butcher terminology for a 200-400 gram muscle from the shoulder of the Ibérico pig — specifically, the anterior portion of the Boston butt just above the trotter. It's not a cut most Americans have heard of. Pork shoulder as we know it in the US gets broken down for pulled-pork and carnitas; the presa is extracted, whole, and sold as a prime cut commanding \$60-90/kg for Ibérico-grade animals. There are only two presas per pig. Restaurants in Spain build entire menus around them.

What makes it special: the marbling. An Ibérico pig fed on acorns during montanera (the autumn free-range feeding period) develops intramuscular fat that looks and behaves like Japanese wagyu — fine networks of fat streaks throughout the muscle, melting at body temperature, carrying the distinctive nutty-sweet flavor of acorn-fed pork. The presa catches more of this marbling than any other cut because it sits in the animal's active shoulder muscle, where the fat concentrates to support movement. Cross-section a raw presa and it looks like a small ribeye — ruby-pink lean muscle laced with pearl-white fat in exactly the pattern you want.

The challenge: the cut is thick (3-5 cm) and wants to be cooked to medium-rare (55-58°C internal) to preserve the marbling's silky texture while ensuring pork-safety pasteurization. Grilling straight from raw tends to overshoot — the outside blackens while the center is still rare, or the inside is done while the outside is underdone. The SV-then-fire solution is surgical: 4 hours at 57°C brings the entire cut to uniform medium-rare, the pasteurization is already complete from the long hold, and the fire finish is pure crust development — 45 seconds per side at maximum heat, no interior cook happening. The result is edge-to-edge pink with a hard mahogany crust and fat that's rendered just enough to coat the tongue without pooling on the plate.

The fire matters. This is a ● Tier B dish where **binchotan** — Japanese white-oak charcoal burning at 1200°C with near-zero smoke and maximum radiant heat — produces a superior crust to standard lump charcoal. But the technique works beautifully on regular kamado-fired lump too. The Tier A version uses lump charcoal raised to max heat, and the result is still a restaurant-grade plate. Tier B is for the dinner party where the fire is half the conversation.

Specs

<p>YIELD</p> <p>1 kg raw presa → 4-6 portions (trimmed)</p>	<p>SV TEMPERATURE</p> <p>57°C / 135°F – uniform medium-rare through the cut</p>	<p>SV TIME</p> <p>4 hours (minimum 2 h for 3-cm cut; 4 h gives full pasteurization + texture tenderization)</p>	<p>FIRE FINISH</p> <p>Max kamado heat (500°C+ grate temp), 45 sec per side</p>
<p>PRESA SIZE</p> <p>1 × 800-1200 g whole piece, or 2 × 400-500 g halves</p>	<p>DIFFICULTY</p> <p>Intermediate</p> <p>●●●○○</p>	<p>ACTIVE TIME</p> <p>25 min (mise + chill + slice + serve)</p>	<p>TARGET INTERNAL</p> <p>Pre-fire: 57°C uniform. Post-fire rest: 58-60°C center.</p>
<p>KEY RULE</p> <p>Chill the SV-cooked presa 15 min in ice bath before fire finish — crust builds without interior overshoot</p>			

What Changed & Why

Two variables: the presa source and the fire. Technique is identical. ● Tier A (Everyday) uses **frozen Ibérico de Cebo presa** (grain-fed Ibérico, still far superior to commodity pork) from **La Tienda online** or **Marky's Aventura** — ~\$40/kg, widely available. Finished over **standard kamado lump charcoal** at maximum heat. Produces a genuinely excellent centerpiece. ● Tier B (No Limits) uses **Ibérico de Bellota presa** (acorn-fed during montanera, ~\$80-100/kg) from **Fermín, Covap, or Ibérico Club** via La Tienda direct-ship — fresh-frozen with certification. Finished over **binchotan white-oak charcoal** (Japanese import via HMart, [Korin online](#), or specialty BBQ shops) layered over the kamado lump. The binchotan upgrade is meaningful: near-zero smoke, 1200°C radiant temperature, cleanest possible Maillard crust. For the Saturday-night version, Tier B is the flex. For any weeknight when you just want a precision pork centerpiece, Tier A is complete.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Grill presa over hot coals 3-4 minutes per side to medium-rare	SV 57°C for 4 hours; chill in bag 15 min ice bath; finish over max-heat fire 45 sec per side	Direct-grilling a 3-5 cm thick cut produces an uneven gradient: outer millimeters overshoot to medium-well while the center hits medium-rare. SV 57°C × 4 h brings the entire cut to uniform 57°C internal — every millimeter is at target before the fire ever touches it. The fire finish is then pure crust development, isolated from the cooking problem. 45 seconds per side at max heat produces a hard mahogany crust with zero interior overshoot. The cooking and the crusting are completely decoupled, which is the whole point of SV-then-fire as a technique category.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Season presa at the moment of cooking	Dry-brine the presa 24 hours before SV — 1% salt by weight, uncovered on a rack in the fridge	The dry-brine accomplishes three things: (1) salt penetrates the muscle via osmotic diffusion, seasoning throughout rather than surface-only, (2) surface moisture evaporates in the fridge's cold dry air, producing a tacky pellicle that crusts dramatically faster on the fire, (3) 24 hours is enough time for the enzymes in the muscle to begin tenderizing the connective tissue. This isn't a minor step — it's the difference between 'good presa' and 'restaurant-grade presa.' Cross-references the chuletón reverse-sear dry-brine card; the principle is universal across muscle proteins.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
ADD	—	Chill the SV-cooked presa 15 minutes in an ice bath (in the bag) before the fire finish	Cross-reference: pulpo-sv-plancha (Batch 9 · this workspace) + merluza-a-la-plancha-refrito (Batch 8) + chuletón-reverse-sear. The chill step is universal SV-then-sear technique: cold protein on max-heat fire gets crust-browning at the surface while the interior barely changes temperature. Warm SV-protein on fire gets crust-browning AND continued interior cook, which overshoots the doneness target. 15 minutes is enough to drop the presa from 57°C to 10-15°C at the surface, which is all you need. Don't skip this.
ADD	—	Include 2 sprigs fresh rosemary + 3 crushed garlic cloves + 1 tbsp olive oil in the SV bag	The aromatics infuse the presa mildly during the 4-hour cook. Rosemary and garlic are the classical Spanish-Ibérico pairing — they complement rather than compete with the pork's natural nutty-sweet flavor. The olive oil helps lubricate the bag, distributes the aromatic fat-solubles, and adds 1-2 extra grams of fat distributed through the muscle. Skip the salt here (already dry-brined); skip pepper (adds bitterness over 4 hours in the bag). Fresh-only aromatics — dried herbs turn dusty at low SV temps.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
ELEV	Standard lump charcoal, medium-high heat	Max-heat kamado lump (Tier A) OR binchotan-topped lump (Tier B), grate temp 500°C+	The fire is the entire second half of this dish. Standard lump at medium-high is not enough — you need maximum heat to get a 45-second crust. Open all kamado vents, run for 15-20 minutes to reach peak temperature. For Tier B: a layer of 3-4 binchotan pieces placed on top of the glowing lump charcoal adds a 1200°C radiant zone with near-zero smoke. Binchotan's ultra-dense Japanese white-oak structure produces cleaner Maillard reactions — no ashy taste, no smoke-muddle, just pure sear. The binchotan upgrade IS the Tier B flex of this recipe. Alternative: skip binchotan and use a cast-iron plancha placed directly on the kamado grate at 300°C — another path to a clean high-temp sear.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
SKIP	Sauce (chimichurri, romesco, mojo verde) alongside the presa	Finish with flake salt + good oil + fresh-cracked black pepper — nothing else	The Ibérico flavor is the entire point. Sauces — even excellent Spanish sauces — mask the nutty-sweet signature that makes this cut worth paying for. If you must, serve ONE sauce on the side (mojo verde or a simple refrito) for guests to optionally use — never plated. Tradition: Ibérico in Spain is almost always served nude. Respect the pig.

What You Need

● Everyday

The Presa

- 1 × 800-1200 g **Ibérico de Cebo presa** — **La Tienda** (online, reliable stock), **Marky's Aventura**, or **Despaña Brand Foods** (online). See [sourcing/03-meats](#). Thaw overnight in fridge if frozen.

The Dry-Brine

- 10 g fine sea salt per kg of presa (1% by weight)
- Optional: 2 g fresh-cracked black pepper (applied 30 min before fire, not before SV)

The SV Bag

- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 3 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 tbsp **good EVOO** — **California Olive Ranch Arbequina** or similar

The Fire

- Kamado with lump charcoal, run at maximum heat (500°C+ grate temp, all vents open)
- Hickory or oak chunks are optional (presa doesn't need added smoke; the Ibérico flavor stands alone)

The Finish

- Flake sea salt — **Maldon**
- 1-2 tbsp finishing olive oil (same or better quality than the bag oil)
- Fresh-cracked black pepper
- Optional: 3-4 sprigs fresh rosemary for visual garnish

No Limits

The Presa (Tier B — the whole point)

- 1 × 800-1200 g **Ibérico de Bellota presa** — the acorn-fed summit grade. Sources: **Fermín Ibérico de Bellota** (via La Tienda), **Covap Alta Expresión**, or **Ibérico Club direct-ship**. Certification labels: Pata Negra (Real Ibérico 100%), or Ibérico de Bellota 75%. Fresh-frozen Spanish product; thaw overnight in fridge.

The Dry-Brine (Tier B)

- 10 g **Sal de Ibiza** OR **fleur de sel de Guérande** per kg presa
- Fresh-cracked **Tellicherry black pepper** (30 min pre-fire)

The SV Bag (Tier B)

- 2 sprigs **fresh rosemary from a windowsill pot** (Miami year-round)
- 3 cloves **Las Pedroñeras DOP purple garlic**
- 1 tbsp **Rincón de la Subbética summit Arbequina**

The Fire (Tier B — the second flex)

- 3-4 pieces of **binchotan (Japanese white-oak charcoal)** — sources: **Korin** (online), **HMart** (if Miami carries it), specialty BBQ shops. Layered on top of a bed of hot kamado lump charcoal at max heat.
- Alternative if no binchotan: cast-iron plancha placed directly on kamado grate (cross-reference merluza + pulpo recipes)

The Finish (Tier B)

- **Fleur de sel de Guérande** OR **Sal de Ibiza**
- 1-2 tbsp **Rincón de la Subbética summit Arbequina**
- Optional: a thin shaving of **fresh Tuber melanosporum** (winter; cross-ref yema curada recipe) — the truffle+Ibérico combination is a Spanish luxury classic

EQUIPMENT

Your Kit

- Sous-vide circulator capable of 57°C stable
 - Vacuum sealer + heavy-gauge bags (4-hour cook; no leaking allowed)
 - Large SV container (~6-8 L)
-

- Kamado grill + chimney starter
- Long tongs for handling hot meat on fire
- Infrared thermometer — for verifying grate temperature
- Instant-read probe thermometer — for verifying internal temp
- Ice bath (large bowl + ice + cold water)
- Sharp slicing knife + carving board
- Warm platter for service

MISE EN PLACE

Before You Start

- Presa dry-brined 24 h in advance, uncovered on rack in fridge
- Kamado loaded with lump charcoal + binchotan (Tier B) ready to light at T-60m
- SV bath stabilized at 57°C 20 min before presa enters bag
- Aromatics prepped for bag; oil measured
- Ice bath prepped 20 min before SV end
- Kamado lit, full-vent, chimney-starter-hot at T-30m to reach max heat
- Warm platter in 50°C oven
- Slicing knife sharp

MAKE - AHEAD

Timeline

- undefined
- undefined

METHOD

The Cook

1 Phase 1 · Dry-Brine — 24 hours ahead

1. Weigh the presa. Calculate salt: 1% by weight (10 g salt per 1000 g presa).
2. Sprinkle salt evenly across all surfaces. Press gently to adhere.
3. Place presa on a wire rack set over a small sheet pan, fat-side-up. Uncovered.
4. Refrigerate for 24 hours. The surface will look dry and slightly tacky after — this is the pellicle, a good sign.
5. Do NOT add pepper at this stage — pepper on a 24-hour brine turns bitter. Crack pepper 30 minutes before fire, not now.



WHY THIS WORKS

Cross-reference: chuletón-reverse-sear (already in library) and merluza-a-la-plancha-refrito (Batch 8). The uncovered-rack-24h dry-brine is the universal crust-prep technique for any muscle protein over 500 g. Salt penetrates 2-3 mm via osmotic diffusion, seasoning the entire cut. Surface moisture evaporates into the fridge's cold dry air, producing a tacky pellicle that sears mahogany in seconds instead of pale-tan in minutes. Endogenous muscle enzymes also begin gentle tenderization during the 24 h rest.

2

Phase 2 · Bag + Sous-Vide — 4 hours 10 min

1. Verify SV bath is at 57°C and stable.
2. Pat presa dry with paper towels (the pellicle from dry-brining is fine; we're removing any extra surface moisture).
3. Place presa + rosemary sprigs + smashed garlic + 1 tbsp olive oil into a heavy-gauge vacuum-sealer bag. Arrange the presa flat, not folded.
4. Vacuum-seal. Double-seal if the bag allows — 4-hour cooks have time to develop leaks.
5. Submerge in the 57°C bath. Clip to container side if it floats.
6. Set 4-hour timer.
7. Walk away for 4 hours. No stirring, no checking.



WHY THIS WORKS

At 57°C, the presa reaches internal temperature equilibrium in about 90 minutes. The remaining 2.5 hours of the 4-hour cook is collagen tenderization — the low-level connective tissue in the shoulder muscle slowly converts to gelatin, producing the silky-tender texture that distinguishes a precision-cooked presa from a grilled one. 57°C is also above the USDA pasteurization threshold for pork (57°C × 90 min achieves full pasteurization), so the 4-hour hold is both safety-certified and texture-optimized.

3

Phase 3 · Ice Bath Chill — 15 minutes

1. Prepare ice bath: large bowl, half ice / half cold water.
2. Remove SV bag from bath. Plunge directly into ice bath. Press down to fully submerge.
3. Leave 15 minutes. Presa internal will drop from 57°C to ~10-15°C at the surface, ~25-30°C at the center.
4. While presa chills: verify kamado at max heat (500°C+ grate temp); open all vents; add binchotan on top of glowing lump if Tier B.
5. After 15 min chill: remove presa from bag; pat fully dry with paper towels; rest briefly on a plate to surface-dry further.
6. Crack fresh black pepper onto surface (both sides). Don't add any more oil — the surface should be dry for the fire.



WHY THIS WORKS

Cross-reference: pulpo-sv-plancha Phase 3 + merluza Phase 1 chill logic. Cold protein + hot fire = crust development without interior temperature rise. Warm SV-just-out-of-bath protein + hot fire = crust + interior overshoot. 15 minutes is calibrated for presa's thickness; octopus tentacles chill faster (20 min is fine); thicker cuts (chuletón) need longer.

4

Phase 4 · The Fire — 90 seconds total

1. Kamado grate should be at maximum heat, verified with infrared thermometer (500°C+ ideal). If using binchotan: pieces should be glowing white-hot.
2. Lay presa on the hot grate directly over the coals. Close the lid if using a kamado hood with vents; leave open if using a simple grill.
3. 45 seconds first side. Do not move, do not check, do not poke.
4. Flip. 45 seconds second side.
5. Remove immediately to a warm platter. Total time on fire: 90 seconds.
6. The surface should be hard mahogany-dark with visible sear marks if the grate has them. The center — verified with a probe thermometer — should read 55-58°C (slight rise expected during rest).



WHY THIS WORKS

At 500°C grate temperature, the Maillard reaction completes in seconds — the browning you want happens almost instantly on contact. At 1200°C binchotan radiant, it's even faster. 45 seconds per side is calibrated to produce a 1-2 mm mahogany crust without the heat penetrating deep enough to raise the interior temperature. The ice-bath chill gives the presa enough thermal buffer that 90 seconds total time doesn't overshoot.

5

Phase 5 · Rest + Slice + Plate — 5 minutes

1. Rest the presa on a warm platter 3-4 minutes. Do not slice earlier. Juices redistribute during rest; slicing immediately dumps them onto the board.
2. After rest, slice the presa across the grain. Presa grain runs lengthwise; your slices should be perpendicular to that, roughly 8-10 mm thick.
3. Arrange slices on the warm platter, slightly overlapping.
4. Drizzle finishing olive oil across the slices. Be generous — oil + Ibérico fat is the complete flavor architecture.
5. Flake salt liberally. Fresh pepper light.
6. Tier B finish: a shaving of fresh truffle if available, or a few flakes of fleur de sel. No sauce.
7. Serve immediately with bread on the side and red wine in hand.



WHY THIS WORKS

The rest allows the muscle fibers to relax and reabsorb the internal moisture that the fire surface-activated. The across-the-grain slicing shortens the fiber length in each bite, so each slice is tender rather than chewy. At 8-10 mm thickness the slices are thick enough to hold their pink color + marbling visually, thin enough to melt the fat at mouth temperature.

QUICK REFERENCE

Timing Cheat Sheet

STEP	TIME	CUE
Dry-brine	T- 2 4 h	1% salt by weight, uncovered on rack
SV bath stabilize	T- 4 h 3 0 m	57°C for 20 min before bag enters
Bag + submerge	T- 4 h 2 0 m	Rosemary + garlic + oil; heavy-gauge bag
SV cook unattended	4 hours	No action required
Light kamado	T- 1 h	Ramp to max heat

STEP	TIME	CUE
Ice bath chill	T- 2 0 m	15 min in bag; kamado finalizes
Out of bag + dry + pepper	T- 5 m	Pat fully dry; crack pepper both sides
Fire finish	T- 0 to T+ 1 m 3 0 s	45 sec side 1, 45 sec side 2
Rest	T+ 1 m 3 0 s to T+ 5 m	Warm platter, 3-4 min
Slice + plate + serve	T+ 5 m to T+ 6 m	Across grain, 8-10 mm, oil + salt

TROUBLESHOOTING

Emergency Protocols

 UNDEFINED

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Technique Notes

● **Universal: Ibérico Marbling Is Not Regular Pork**

PROTEIN SCIENCE · SPANISH PORK TRADITION

Ibérico de Bellota pigs fed on acorns during montanera (the autumn free-range period) produce intramuscular fat chemically closer to olive oil than typical pork fat — high in oleic acid (monounsaturated), low saturated fat ratio, melting at 30-34°C (below body temp). This is what makes acorn-fed Ibérico taste like 'the best pork ever made' — the fat melts on the tongue rather than coating it, carrying the distinctive nutty-sweet flavor profile that's been compared to wagyu. Regular commodity pork fat melts at 40-45°C and leaves a greasy residue. Cooking Ibérico like commodity pork (well-done, with sauces) destroys the advantage. The correct cook: precision temperature (55-60°C), minimal seasoning, rest, slice, eat. Reference: Protein Encyclopedia §Ibérico Pork; Spanish Foundations §Pata Negra.

● **Universal: The SV-Then-Fire Workflow for Thick Cuts**

TWO-PHASE COOKING · CROSS-PROTEIN

Cross-reference: pulpo-sv-plancha (Batch 9 #1), perfect-sous-vide-steak, chuletón-reverse-sear. The workflow generalizes: any thick cut (3+ cm) benefits from decoupling doneness (SV, long time, low temp) from crust (fire, short time, max heat). The cold-start fire finish is the essential glue — without the chill, you can't actually isolate the two processes. Applies to: SV steak + kamado, SV duck magret + kamado, SV short ribs + kamado, SV pork belly + crisping in oven, SV presa + fire (this recipe). Master this ONE workflow and it unlocks ~30 recipes across proteins. The 57°C + 4 h parameters are specific to medium-rare pork; other proteins have their own temperature-time couples. Reference: Sous Vide §Temperature Tables; Cross-Technique Workflows §Two-Phase.

● **Universal: Dry-Brine 24h — The Crust-Prep Technique**

SURFACE PREPARATION · UNIVERSAL

1% salt by weight + 24 h uncovered on a rack in the fridge = the universal crust-prep technique for any muscle protein over 500 g. Cross-reference: chuletón-reverse-sear (already in library), merluza-a-la-plancha-refrito (Batch 8). The science: salt diffuses into the muscle (~2-3 mm in 24 h), the surface moisture evaporates into the fridge's dry cold air, endogenous muscle enzymes begin tenderization. Result: seasoned-throughout + dry-surface + partially-tenderized = perfect crust-ready condition. Applies identically to: steak, pork roast, duck breast, chicken, lamb leg, whole turkey. Zero-extra-effort technique; time + salt + air = results. Reference: Protein Encyclopedia §Dry Brining; Cross-Technique Workflows §Pre-Sear Prep.

● **Universal: The Cold Start on Fire — Why Chill Matters**

FINISHING PHYSICS · CROSS-PROTEIN

Chilled protein (10-15°C) onto max-heat fire = crust development in the outermost 1-2 mm with near-zero interior temperature rise. Warm protein (40°C+) onto max-heat fire = crust + interior overshoot. This is the universal finishing physics across SV-then-sear recipes. It's also why the reverse-sear works: bringing the internal temperature to near-target in a low oven, then chilling briefly, then finishing on max heat. Cross-references: pulpo-sv-plancha, chuletón-reverse-sear, duck-magret-sv-kamado, this recipe. For home cooks: always plan the chill into the timing. 10-15 min ice-bath for smaller cuts; 15-20 min for larger. Never skip. Reference: Cross-Technique Workflows §Sear Physics; Sous Vide §Finishing Strategies.

● Spanish Tradition: Ibérico Nude — Minimalism at Plating

FLAVOR ARCHITECTURE · SPANISH DISCIPLINE

The Spanish culinary position on Ibérico is unambiguous: the pig is so flavorful, so expensive, and so regionally distinctive that the best treatment is minimal. Jamón Ibérico is served room-temp, sliced, on a plate — nothing else (maybe bread). Presa on the kamado is finished with salt + oil + pepper — nothing else. Pluma, secreto, and other Ibérico cuts follow the same plating principle. Sauces are a non-Spanish tradition applied to Ibérico, and in Spain it's considered a waste of the product. This is the tradition Pablo's library follows. For home cooks: when you're cooking ~\$80/kg pork, serve it without distractions. This minimalism principle extends: Galician pulpo (salt + oil + pimentón), lubina a la sal (salt-crust + oil), grilled sardines (salt + lemon). Reference: Spanish Foundations §Plating Tradition; Flavor Architecture §Minimalism.

● No Limits: Ibérico de Bellota — What Acorn-Fed Means

INGREDIENT QUALITY · SOURCING HIERARCHY

The Ibérico classification system has four tiers (by feed + genetics): Pata Negra / Real Ibérico 100% de Bellota (100% genetics + 100% acorn-fed), Ibérico 75% de Bellota, Ibérico de Cebo Campo (mixed feed, free-range), Ibérico de Cebo (grain-fed, confined). The bellota tiers access the montanera — the October-to-February period when pigs roam oak forests (dehesas) eating acorns + wild herbs + grasses. This diet is what produces the oleic-acid-rich fat that gives Ibérico its distinctive flavor + texture. Tier B for this recipe = any bellota grade. Tier A = de cebo is still significantly better than commodity pork. Sources: Fermín, Covap, Ibérico Club via La Tienda; fresh-frozen direct-ship from Spain. Reference: Protein Encyclopedia §Ibérico Tiers; Sourcing §Spanish Pantry.

● No Limits: Binchotan — 1200°C of Clean Radiant Heat

FIRE EXTENSION · JAPANESE IMPORT

Binchotan (備長炭) is ultra-dense Japanese white-oak charcoal, compressed during carbonization until it rings like metal when struck. It burns at ~1200°C (vs. lump charcoal's 800-900°C), produces essentially zero smoke (no ashy taste), and lasts 3-4 hours at full intensity. For the presa finish, binchotan's radiant heat produces the cleanest possible Maillard crust — no smoke haze, no bitter-ashy residue, just pure caramelization. It must be started from an existing hot fire (lump charcoal bed is the standard method); it doesn't self-ignite like briquette. Sources: Korin online (reliable US shipping), HMart if Miami carries, specialty Japanese-BBQ shops. Cost: \$40-60 per 1-kg bag; 3-4 pieces per cook. Reusable if kept dry between cooks. The Tier B flex for any direct-fire Ibérico preparation. Reference: Kamado Technique §Fuel Types; Luxury Ingredients §Japanese Charcoal.

PAIRING

What to Drink

🍷 Wine — The Rioja Match

Tier A: La Rioja Alta Viña Alberdi Reserva (grocery-tier, consistent) · Tier B: La Rioja Alta Gran Reserva 904 or CVNE Imperial Gran Reserva

Ibérico + Rioja is the canonical Spanish pairing. The wine's tempranillo-based structure, moderate tannin, oak-aging complexity, and savory-leather evolution are the exact complement to the pork's nutty-sweet fat. Gran Reserva tier matches Ibérico de Bellota in weight class. Avoid: bright young reds (too aggressive), oaky Chardonnay (competes with fat), most new-world styles (too fruit-forward).

🍷 Wine — The Alternative

Ribera del Duero (Vega Sicilia Alión or Protos Crianza) OR a serious Priorat

Ribera's bolder tempranillo expression works with Ibérico's intensity; Priorat's garnacha-based power matches the cut's richness. Both are heavier-bodied than Rioja and suit a Saturday-night context. Serve at 16-18°C.

Wine — The Sherry Option

Amontillado or Oloroso sherry (Lustau, Gonzalez Byass), served at wine temperature (14-16°C) not fridge-cold

Aged sherries are genuinely exceptional with Ibérico — the nutty-oxidative profile of amontillado + the dark-caramel-walnut of oloroso echo the pig's acorn-fed notes perfectly. Spanish tradition; deeply underused outside Spain. Try one small glass alongside the main pour.

Bread — The Accompaniment

Pan de payés Catalán (Batch 7 · this workspace) OR a good country sourdough

The presa's fat + oil pool on the platter; bread sops it up. Non-negotiable. Slice thick, grill lightly on the kamado while the fire is hot. Serve on a separate plate.

Side — Restrained

Blistered padrón peppers (plancha, 60 sec per side, Maldon), OR simple green salad (sherry vinegar + oil + salt)

The dish is rich, concentrated, about a specific protein. Side should be a palate-reset or texture-contrast, not a flavor competitor. Padrón peppers work best — quick plancha cook while the presa rests, peppers + Ibérico is a classical Spanish combination. Avoid: anything tomato-heavy (competes with the oil finish), anything creamy (clashes with the fat), anything starchy besides the bread.

Menu Context — Saturday Night Centerpiece

Open with a small plate of jamón ibérico + pan amb oli. Middle with escabeche (Batch 5). Presa as main. Close with tarta de queso vasca (Batch 6).

A full Ibérico-celebration meal. The jamón opener previews the pig; the escabeche cleanses; the presa delivers; the cheesecake closes the rich-dairy arc. Scales to 6-8 guests cleanly.

Menu Ideas

Saturday Dinner · 6-8 guests · Ibérico Night

1. Jamón ibérico (50 g per person, room temp) + pan con tomate (arrival). 2. Mejillones escabeche (Batch 5 tapa, pantry). 3. Presa SV + fire (this recipe, centerpiece, scale to 1.5-2 kg raw for 8). 4. Tarta de queso vasca (Batch 6, dessert). Rioja Reserva throughout. Full Ibérico-celebration arc, mostly make-ahead.

Kamado Weekend · 4 guests · Outdoor Dinner

Everything on/around the kamado. 1. Plancha-blistered padrón peppers (hot grate, 60 sec each side). 2. Presa SV + fire (this recipe, main). 3. Kamado pizza for leftovers if any. 4. Casual dessert (ice cream). Outdoor table, Rioja + Albariño, music. Summer-Miami night.

SV Technique Dinner · 4 guests · Batch 9 Progression

1. Yema curada SV (Batch 9 · opener). 2. Pulpo SV-plancha (Batch 9). 3. Presa SV + fire (this recipe · main). A full sous-vide-technique arc across three temperatures (63°C → 77°C → 57°C) and three proteins (egg, cephalopod, pork). Extreme pedagogy, excellent food.

Intimate Dinner · 2-4 guests

Scale to a 400-500 g presa. Full technique, minimal fuss. Bread + salad side + good wine. 45 minutes of active attention spread across 4.5 hours. Tuesday-night ambitious cooking when Pablo wants to prove the SV setup pays for itself.

YOUR NOTES

Cook Log

Session Notes

Date: _____ · Serves: _____ · Rating: ___ / 5

Use this space to record what you changed, what worked, and what you'd do differently next time. Your future self will thank you.



Stop following recipes. Start understanding food.

