



Lechon Kawali

Ingredients

- 4 pounds boneless pork belly, skin on
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- 1 stalk lemongrass, smashed and sliced diagonally
- 6 cloves garlic, smashed
- 3 Thai bird chiles, sliced
- 6 whole star anise
- 5 dried bay leaves
- 2 tablespoons black peppercorns
- Kosher salt
- Canola oil, for deep-frying

Instructions

1. Boil the Pork Belly

Place the pork belly skin-side down in a large, wide pot. Pour in enough water to fully cover the pork. Add scallions, lemongrass, garlic, chiles, star anise, bay leaves, peppercorns, and 3 tablespoons kosher salt.

Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, reduce heat to medium-low, cover the pot, and simmer for 1 hour.

After an hour, flip the pork belly so the skin side is up. Cover again and simmer for another hour.

2. Cool and Dry the Pork

Remove the pot from heat and let the pork cool in the cooking liquid until it reaches room temperature, about 1 hour.

Once cooled, remove the pork from the liquid and scrape off any remaining aromatics.

Transfer the pork to a wire rack set over a baking sheet. Pat the skin dry with paper towels.

Rub 1 tablespoon of kosher salt evenly over the pork skin. Leave the pork uncovered in the refrigerator for at least 8 hours or overnight to air dry. This step helps ensure crispy skin.

3. Deep-Fry the Pork

Fill a large Dutch oven or deep pot halfway with canola oil and heat over medium-high until the oil reaches 375°F (190°C) on a deep-fry thermometer.

Cut the pork belly into long 1-inch wide strips, making sure each strip has some skin. Season the strips with 2 tablespoons kosher salt.

Working in batches, carefully fry the pork strips in the hot oil. Turn occasionally, frying until the skin puffs up and turns golden brown and crispy, about 8 minutes per batch.

If the oil splatters, partially cover the pot with a lid, leaving a small gap so steam can escape.

4. Rest and Serve

Transfer the fried pork to a wire rack to drain and cool slightly.

Once cool enough to handle, cut the strips into 1-inch bite-sized pieces.

Serve hot with your favorite dipping sauces like vinegar-based sawsawan or sweet lechon sauce.