

Aromatic Christmas Ham

Nigella Lawson

METHOD

1. Put all the ingredients, except those for the glaze, into a large pan, on the stove but off the heat, adding water until the ham is covered.
2. Turn on the heat and bring to the boil, then turn down to a simmer and partially cover the pan. Cook for about 2 hours. (This may not seem long for a big joint, but as it will carry on cooking as it cools, and this is going to be eaten cold, I don't want it overcooked. Nor do you.)
3. Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6. Lift the ham gently out of the hot liquid, sit it on a board and let it cool slightly, not too much but just so that you can touch it without burning yourself.
4. With a sharp knife, strip off the rind, and a little of the fat layer if it's very thick, but leave a thin layer of fat. I love this work: it is peculiarly gratifying seeing the hot blubbery fat slither off. Use the same knife to score a diamond pattern in the remaining fat on the ham, in lines about 2cm apart. Stud the points of each diamond with a clove.
5. Put the cranberry or redcurrant jelly, cinnamon, paprika and red wine vinegar into a little saucepan and whisk together over a high heat, bringing it to the boil. Let the pan bubble away, for about 5 minutes, so that the glaze reduces to a syrupy consistency that will coat the fat on the ham.
6. Now sit the ham in a roasting tin lined with foil, as the sugar in the glaze will burn in the oven as it drips off. Pour the glaze over the diamond-studded ham, then put it in the oven for about 15 minutes, or until the glazed fat has caught and burnished. Take the ham out of the oven and sit it on a wooden board to cool (2-3 hours) before you carve it.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 kg smoked gammon, with knuckle bone
- 250ml red wine
- water to cover
- 1 large onion, halved
- 2 cloves garlic (unpeeled)
- 1 head fennel, halved
- 2 star anise
- 1 x 15ml tablespoon coriander seed
- 1 x 15ml tablespoon fennel seed
- 1 x 15ml tablespoon mixed peppercorns

FOR THE GLAZE:

- 20 whole cloves approx.
- 4 x 15ml tablespoons cranberry or redcurrant jelly
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon red wine vinegar

Serve with Christmas Chutney,
Mango Chutney or Cranberry Jelly