

Guanciale



Guanciale is a pork meat which comes from cheek of the pig, and its devotees claim there is no substitute for it. It's not very easily found in the United States for several reasons, one of which is that the FDA has banned all imports of this meat from Europe. Luckily, Canadian and American farmers are catching on to this succulent fat, ideal for cooking.

This delectable, robustly flavored meat is seasoned on the surface with salt, pepper, sage, rosemary and garlic. Seasoning may change region to region based on tradition and curing habits. It is then dried and aged for at least 3 months, a fundamental process which concentrates the flavors.

Italians love their *guanciale* and for good reason – the fat lends marvelous flavor to any meal, most especially pasta dishes. The flavor is so strong that a little bit of the meat goes a long way in a meal. It's famously found in ***spaghetti alla carbonara*** or ***bucatini all'amatriciana***.

Aside from the obvious dishes such as carbonara and amatriciana which have already been mentioned, *guanciale* is also used in dishes such as pasta and fava beans, pasta alla gricia, 'nduja calabrese, strozzapreti, pecorino romano e guanciale, tagliatelle con guanciale e zucca.