

Hello Everyone:

I just wanted to drop you a not so quick note to let you know that Heartland was able to secure the only Minnesota-raised Mangalista pigs available in the Twin Cities market. Provenance Farm in Taylors Falls (see below for contact information) raised four Mangalistas this past year, and only two and a half were made available to restaurants. I worked directly with Provenance's Cristina Cruz-Jones to secure all of that.

For those of you unfamiliar with the breed, Mangalista (MON-ga-leet-sa; Hungarian sp. Mangalica) pigs were first bred in 1833 by Hungarian Royal Archduke Jozsef. They are considered a lard-type breed as opposed to the more typical meat-type breeds that we commonly see today. As such, they are higher in unsaturated fat and oleic acid which allows for more stability during curing processes. They also possess on average twice the marbling of other breeds with fat that melts at a much lower temperature. In fact, the fat is so creamy that it can be whipped while still raw. Needless to say, they have a depth and intensity of flavor that is unlike other pig breeds that are currently available in this market. Both the French Laundry and The Herbfarm are featuring Mangalista pork.

The pigs were raised utilizing traditional Austrian techniques which call for free range pasture-grazing that is supplemented by a diet of barley. Corn and other vegetable crops that are high in polyunsaturated fats are avoided since those fats contribute to making the fat less stable and more prone to rancidity. Given the nature of Mangalitsa pork, it is particularly suited to curing. Consequently, I will be working on various items including lardo, bacon, sausages, guanciale, spare ribs and hams, that should serve to best utilize that quality. In addition, we will be grilling the loin chops, shoulder chops, and tenderloins and roasting the prime ribs. We will also have trotters, heads, ears, tongues and offal. The bones will be roasted for stocks, and some of the fat will be used for terrines. The ears and skin will be fried for garnishes and breads.

The first of these pigs have already been processed, and we are planning on introducing the chops to the menu this weekend. I expect it will be several months before all of the various cuts and cured meats work their way through our menus.

I sampled the first of these pigs a couple of weeks ago. Mega and I had some of the bacon for breakfast followed by some loin chops for dinner. While it was quite delicious and unlike any other pork I have had outside of Europe, I have to admit that, like foie gras, it should be consumed in moderation. That is good since, also like foie gras, it is quite expensive. Our cost including processing and delivery is \$7.50 per pound hanging weight. Compare that to our normal Duroc pigs from Hidden Stream which cost us \$2.50 per pound when all the subsequent costs are factored or to free range veal (\$3.50), pastured lamb (\$5.50) and wild

boar (\$6.50). Consequently, portion sizes will reflect not only the richness of the meat but also the cost. Typical yield from a hanging weight animal runs in the range of 50%. That means our cost per pound for this pork is \$15.00. I don't plan on selling \$45 pork chops so expect for portions to be in the maximum range of six to eight ounces. Everything will be hand cut by me using a hand saw, cleaver, knife and steel.

Obviously, I am pretty excited to be able to offer this to our guests. If you haven't had an opportunity to try Mangalista before, I encourage you do so. I think you will be amazed at the difference.

Regards:

Lenny Russo  
Heartland