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## Ham Carving Instructions

### Firstly storage.

When your ham arrives, it will most likely be wrapped in grease-proof paper or cling film. Take your ham out of the box and wrap, and with some kitchen roll, give the ham a good wipe. Mould is a permanent feature of the hams. Before they are dispatched by Rodriguez, they have a thick inch or two of furry mould over them. The mould can be a variety of colours and you will see previously painted in stains of mould of grey/green/black). This is then painted into the ham with a paintbrush with oil on. Over time (usually a couple of months or so), you will get the mould coming back.

When you take the wrap off the ham, when it is opened, you may well see more mould growth, and the same wiping just needs to be done. Our open hanging ones in the restaurant, we wipe down every month or so. As yours are boxed, there is less ventilation and you will see this sort of mould growth. It is harmless, but doesn't taste nice, which is why the outside skin and fat is always cut off before carving. Best thing to do is get a bit of cooking oil on kitchen roll and wipe the ham.

For storage, the most important thing is to avoid moisture. So cooler rooms (it doesn't have to be cold – bear in mind normal storage conditions in Spain! ) and reasonably well ventilated rooms are best.



Make sure that the ham is secured firmly in the Jamonero (ham holder), and it is on a flat and steady surface. The first thing you should do when carving a ham is to remove the skin and external fat with the cooks knife - don't go all the way to the meat though this is a tidy up. Then with the trotter bottom side uppermost make a deep cut up to the knee bone. From this cut you will extract the slices from the back of the leg which is the thickest part of the ham.



If the ham is going to be carved and consumed immediately then you should remove all the skin and external fat completely. Otherwise, you should clean and skin the ham as you carve it. This prevents the ham going stale, and aids in the preservation process.



Try to carve the ham as thinly as possible and don't make the slices too large - about the width of a small bacon rasher and about half the length is perfect. Prior to each carving ensure that the adjacent skin and fat is cleaned away as this will avoid stale flavours and unnecessary 'chewy' bits. It's easier said than done, but try and keep the surface completely flat and avoid a dip as you carve.





When you have carved the ham down as far as the hip bone, use a sharp boning knife to cut around the bone so that the following slices can be removed cleanly from the ham.

If you stop carving at this point you should protect the cut surface of the ham with some of the thickest pieces of fat and skin that were removed at the beginning. This ensures that the cut surface of the serrano ham does not dry out. Alternatively, brush the cut area lightly with olive oil and lay cling film over top. The cling film only needs to be applied to the cut surface, not the entire serrano ham.



Always try to keep the cuts as straight and level as possible, even at the hip of the ham. Try cutting from different directions, but always lengthwise in order to keep the cut surface level.



When you have carved enough ham to reach the point where the femur and the kneecap joins, it is best to only carve from the shoulder end near the hip bone - leaving the lower part (back of the knee) until later on.



Now on the lower part of the ham, (uppermost on the Jamonero) using a sharp knife - cut deeply into the ham alongside the fibula and remove it. The serrano ham from this part can be sliced, or cubed.



Once you have removed all the ham from one side, turn the ham upside down (trotter facing downwards).



Carve the ham from the knee to the hip, this will result in short thin slices



That's it done! Well nearly done anyway, what you have left is a superb bone from which to create your own "caldo", or stock with. All you need do now is chop the bone into manageable size chunks and add to the stock pot.

## Tips

- If you slice some too thickly, try grilling it or frying it until crispy. It's fantastic broken up sprinkled on salads or on top of cheese on toast.
- If any pieces dry out and go to hard, boil them in stock and use them in soups or stews.
- Keep your non slicing hand well out of the way (behind the bone) – this way, you get to keep all your fingers!
- You can keep your ham 6-12 months before starting to carve it; just keep it in a coolish room off the floor
- Once you have started to slice your ham, it is best all finished within 6 weeks for absolute perfect condition, but is fine over 3 months too
- If any moulds develop, they are natural, just rub them off with kitchen roll in cooking oil.
- Keep your leg out of the fridge. When sliced, wrap it in cling film and store it in the fridge.

If you need any advice, please call Lunya on 0151 706 9770 or email [info@lunya.co.uk](mailto:info@lunya.co.uk)

Have a look at these videos, for very helpful instructions:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzPD3CDK90g>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWYb3eJORMk>