



Südtiroler Speck Konsortium
Consorzio Tutela Speck Alto Adige

SPECK ALTO ADIGE PGI

A blend of herbs and curing traditions

Speck Alto Adige PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) is a boned, specially cut, dry-seasoned, lightly smoked raw ham which is air dried or aged for at least twenty-two weeks. Unique in its flavor and unmistakable in its appearance, the speck (pronounced “shpek” and also known as “farmer’s bacon”) owes its uniqueness to the particular climate of South Tyrol’s valleys and the traditional production method. South Tyrol – Alto Adige, at the geographical transition between the Mediterranean and Central European cultures and ways of life, is the home of this very special method of preserving pork as a symbiosis between air drying and light smoking. More mild than the intense, rustic northern smoked hams, but at the same time stronger and spicier than their Mediterranean counterparts, Speck Alto Adige sets itself apart through particularly balanced flavor.

Speck Alto Adige PGI may only be made by producers that are recognized by the Consorzio Tutela Speck Alto Adige (29). They are contractually obligated to adhere to the production specifications, to adapt their production sites correspondingly, and to grant free access at any time to inspectors from an independent institute.

Processing

Good raw materials are the prerequisites for a good product. Therefore only lean, meaty pork thighs from pigs raised on renowned, quality-controlled farms are used for Speck Alto Adige. The meat originates exclusively from recognized, inspected facilities. No livestock and no deep-frozen meat may be imported for the production of “Speck Alto Adige PGI”.

Speck Alto Adige PGI is

Seasoned in a typical manner: the hams are rubbed primarily by hand with salt and a special mixture of spices and left to season in cool rooms for three weeks. How salt, pepper, bay leaf, juniper berries, and rosemary are balanced with each other is determined individually by every producer using their own closely guarded recipes. They must only see to it that the final salt content does not exceed five percent.

Smoked in a typical manner: after seasoning, the hams are alternately subjected to the light smoke from low-resin wood and the fresh air of the South Tyrolean valleys for five days. The temperature of the smoke may not exceed a mild 20°C (68° F.) Only in this way does the speck take on its unique, finely spiced aroma.

Aged in a typical manner: for approximately twenty-two weeks, the hams have the time to mature to their special level. They hang in special rooms that are constantly monitored for temperature and humidity and are ventilated with the pure, cool air of the South Tyrolean valleys. During the aging process, the speck loses around a third of its original weight and takes on its typically firm structure.



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Only when the speck fulfills all of the guidelines and has passed all of the inspections after the aging period may it carry the name of its origin, “South Tyrol”.

Production numbers

Annual production of Speck Alto Adige PGI: around 2.6 million hams

Weight per ham: around 4.5 kg. (around 10 lbs.)

Nutritional Values

The high nutritional value and amount of top-quality proteins make Speck Alto Adige the ideal alternative to fresh meat, fish, or eggs.

100 grams of Speck contain

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Energy | 300 Kcal/1.254 kj |
| Protein | 30.7 g |
| Carbohydrate | 1.2 g |
| Fat | 19.1 g |
| of which saturated fatty acids | 6.6 g |
| Fiber | 0.0 g |

Quick Tips: storage and slicing

- Store in a dark, cool place (around 5° C. or 41° F.) or in the refrigerator, vacuum-packed speck will keep for several months.
- For the complete aroma to develop, it should always be removed from its packaging a few hours before eating.
- Speck that has been removed from its packaging may be kept for several weeks wrapped in a damp cloth or between two bowls. The cooler and more humid it is, the softer it remains; the warmer and drier, the harder the speck becomes. Mold which may form on the surface can simply be wiped away, or else the first slice may be discarded. This does not affect the quality of the product.
- Speck should always be sliced against the grain in order to guarantee tenderness in the mouth. When slicing, one should begin at the edge of the ham, since that is the area that dries out more quickly.
- There are the most varied of ways of slicing speck: with or without the crust, by hand or by machine, elegantly and in paper-thin slices, in strips, or diced – each one of these methods leads to a different taste experience.

Speck Alto Adige PGI - Quick Facts

Flavor: Mildly salty, perfumed with herbs and spices with a light smokiness

Pairing: Wildflower honey, melon, fresh figs, dried dates, apples, nuts

Wines: Sparkling wines, Schiava (Vernatsch), Lagrein and Gewürztraminer

Beer: Bold lagers

Uses: This versatile food complements the flavors of eggs, potatoes, cabbage, pasta, risotto, and slaws. Top pizza with thin slices, bake in the oven to make crisps, wrap fish or shrimp and grill.

Best of all, enjoy it as is or as a part of a charcuterie board.