

# LEGENDS *from* EUROPE



## Prosciutto di Parma®

*Natural goodness. World traveler.  
Slow-cured sweetness. Legendary traceability.  
Authentically European.*

### NATURAL FROM THE START

Prosciutto di Parma is free of additives, cured only with the help of air and sea salt. Though natural production methods are exactly what contemporary customers want, this is not a new idea. In fact, all Parma Ham® has been produced with the same painstaking care since Roman times, when they were considered a delicacy suitable for banquet tables. By law, this world-famous ham can be cured only in the gently rolling countryside near Parma, Italy, in the foothills of the Apennines. Traditionally, producers opened their windows to capture the aromatic breezes needed to air cure the hams.

### SUPERIOR PORK, CURED SLOWLY

To qualify for Parma Ham production, specially bred pigs must be born and raised according to strict guidelines on approved farms in 10 regions of northern and central Italy. At the curing facilities, or *prosciuttifici*, that dot the countryside, highly experienced “salt masters” apply just the right amount of sea salt to produce a ham with the desired savory-sweet flavor profile. For months, workers monitor humidity and temperature as the hams slowly develop their distinctive flavor. A curing period of at least 400 days ensures that customers will be rewarded with perfectly cured Parma Ham every time.



### FARM-TO-TABLE EXCELLENCE

All of the approximately 160 Parma Ham producers belong to the Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma, which guarantees their products’ authenticity. Every step is monitored closely, not only by association representatives but by independent technical experts. Marks on the pork legs indicating origin, processor’s identification and the date curing began provide visual evidence of a quality-control system that is entirely transparent.

### THE FINISHING TOUCH

When the hams are cured to the desired stage, the moment of truth arrives. As a final quality test, an inspector pierces the ham in several locations with the traditional horse bone needle, sniffing after each puncture. If the ham possesses the sweet-savory fragrance typical of Prosciutto di Parma, it is branded with the five-pointed Parma Crown, reminiscent of a time when the Duchy of Parma ruled this region. Every Parma Ham also comes with an extra guarantee of authenticity: the European Union’s coveted PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) certification.

### ON THE MOVE

Once branded with the Parma crown, the hams are considered ready for market, although some are aged even longer — up to 36 months. Most hams are deboned before being shipped to their destination, where retailers and chefs cut paper-thin slices to order. American consumers can also buy Prosciutto di Parma that is pre-sliced and packaged in Italy under the Consorzio’s supervision.

### EATING PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA

Prosciutto di Parma serves as an energy booster because it contains amino acids, a quick-metabolizing form of protein. There are only 75 calories in a one-ounce serving, which contains 6 grams of fat, roughly two-thirds of it the “good” unsaturated kind. Prosciutto di Parma is also a good source of B-vitamins, especially thiamin. Classic ways of serving Prosciutto di Parma include pairing slices with melon and other fruit, garnishing a salad with strips of the ham and strewing a freshly cooked pizza with Prosciutto di Parma. Some chefs and cooks wrap fish or other seafood in Prosciutto di Parma before crisping on a grill or in a skillet. One of the simplest ideas remains the best: Paper-thin slices of Prosciutto di Parma, artfully draped on a platter. 🍴



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