



CONSORZIO
PARMA
PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA

HISTORY OF THE CONSORZIO

The Consorzio was established in 1963 by 23 producers who wanted to protect and promote their product throughout the world. Since then, production has been regulated by strict laws, defining the quality characteristics of Prosciutto di Parma, identified by the Parma Crown branded on every ham.



THE CONSORZIO TODAY



The Consorzio is a family of 145 Prosciutto di Parma producers supplying more than 9 million hams annually to markets all over the world.



3,000 employees are involved in the production of Parma Ham.



The pigs are supplied by 4,000 breeding farms and 120 slaughterhouses.



WHAT DOES THE CONSORZIO DO?

- Promotes and protects the Prosciutto di Parma brand worldwide.
- Provides technical assistance to all of its producers.
- Ensures compliance by breeders, slaughterhouses, producers and points of sale.
- Maintains status as a Protected Designation of Origin product.





THE PDO SYSTEM

The PDO system certifies the authenticity of European foods.

- In 1996, Prosciutto di Parma became one of the first products to be awarded PDO status
- PDO protects the names and traditions of high-quality European foods, made according to traditional methods in a specific geographic region.
- Offers quality assurance and a guarantee that you are buying a genuine product.
- To qualify, products must meet rigorous criteria, strict, legally binding production guidelines, and quality standards.



PDO = Protected
Designation of Origin

**WHAT MAKES
PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA
SO SPECIAL?**





ONLY FOUR INGREDIENTS

100% natural – No preservatives, additives, nitrites, nitrates, water or smoking.



**Specially Bred
Italian Pork**



Sea Salt



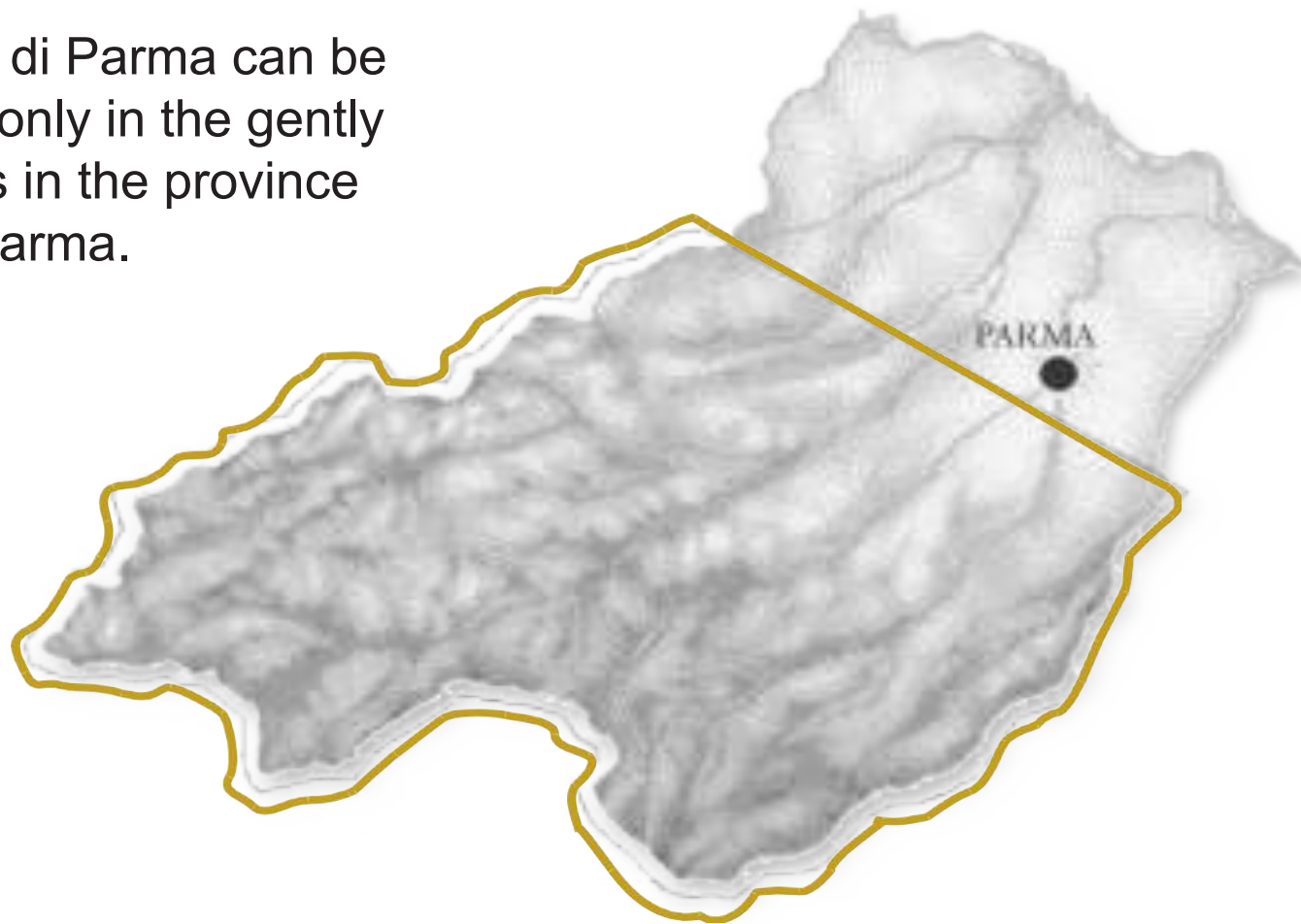
Air



Time

PRODUCTION AREA

Prosciutto di Parma can be produced only in the gently rolling hills in the province south of Parma.



PRODUCTION AREA

Prosciutto di Parma is produced in the Emilia Romagna region of North Central Italy.

The air is dry and sweet, with aromatic breezes from the Apennine mountains creating the perfect environmental conditions for the natural “drying” of the hams.



ONLY THE FINEST ITALIAN PIGS



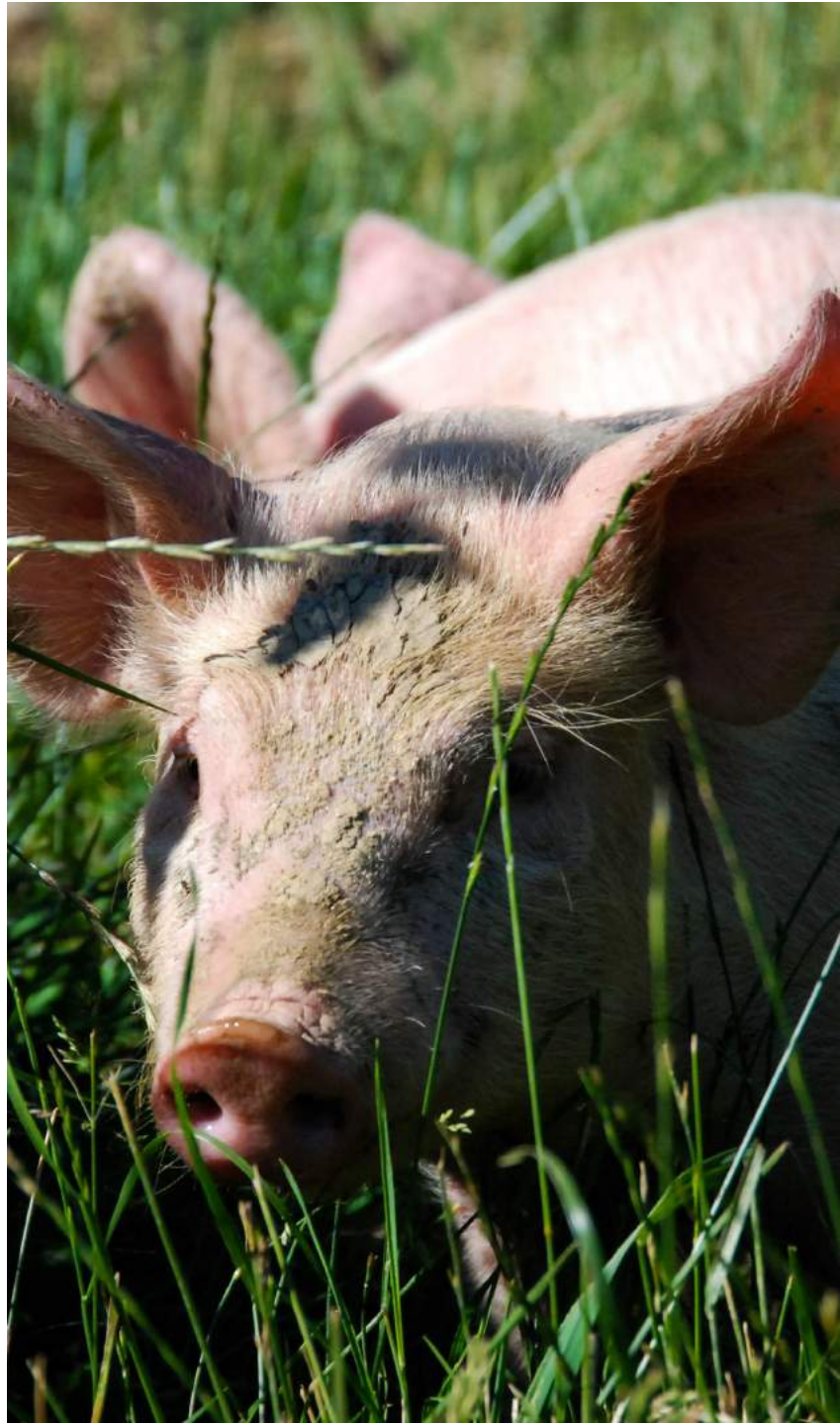
Nine months old and 350 pounds – larger and older than most pigs used for ham.



Only three allowable breeds: Large White, Landrace and Duroc



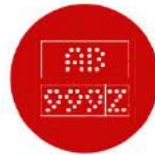
Fed a mixture of cereals, grains and whey from cheese production.





COMPLETE TRACEABILITY

Each production step, from the pig breeding and processing to the final packaging, is monitored and controlled by technical specialists.



Each pig receives a breeder tattoo, indicating its age and the the farm on which it was raised.



Each leg is branded with a mark identifying the slaughterhouse.



Each ham is then tagged with a metal button indicating the date it began curing.



The Parma Crown is the final guarantee of the quality of the ham, as well as an identifier for the producer.

LOCATION OF BREEDING FARMS

To qualify for Prosciutto di Parma production, specially bred pigs must be born and raised according to strict guidelines on approved farms in 10 regions of Italy.



PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA CURING PROCESS



THE SALTING

After the pork legs reach the prosciuttificio (processing plant), salting is done by hand in the traditional way, by the maestro salatore, the salt master.



THE CURING

The hams are held for 100 days in climate-controlled refrigerated rooms to ensure that the meat absorbs exactly the right amount of salt.

They are then rinsed and moved to large airy rooms, where the windows are opened to aromatic breezes that help dry and cure the hams and impart a special flavor.



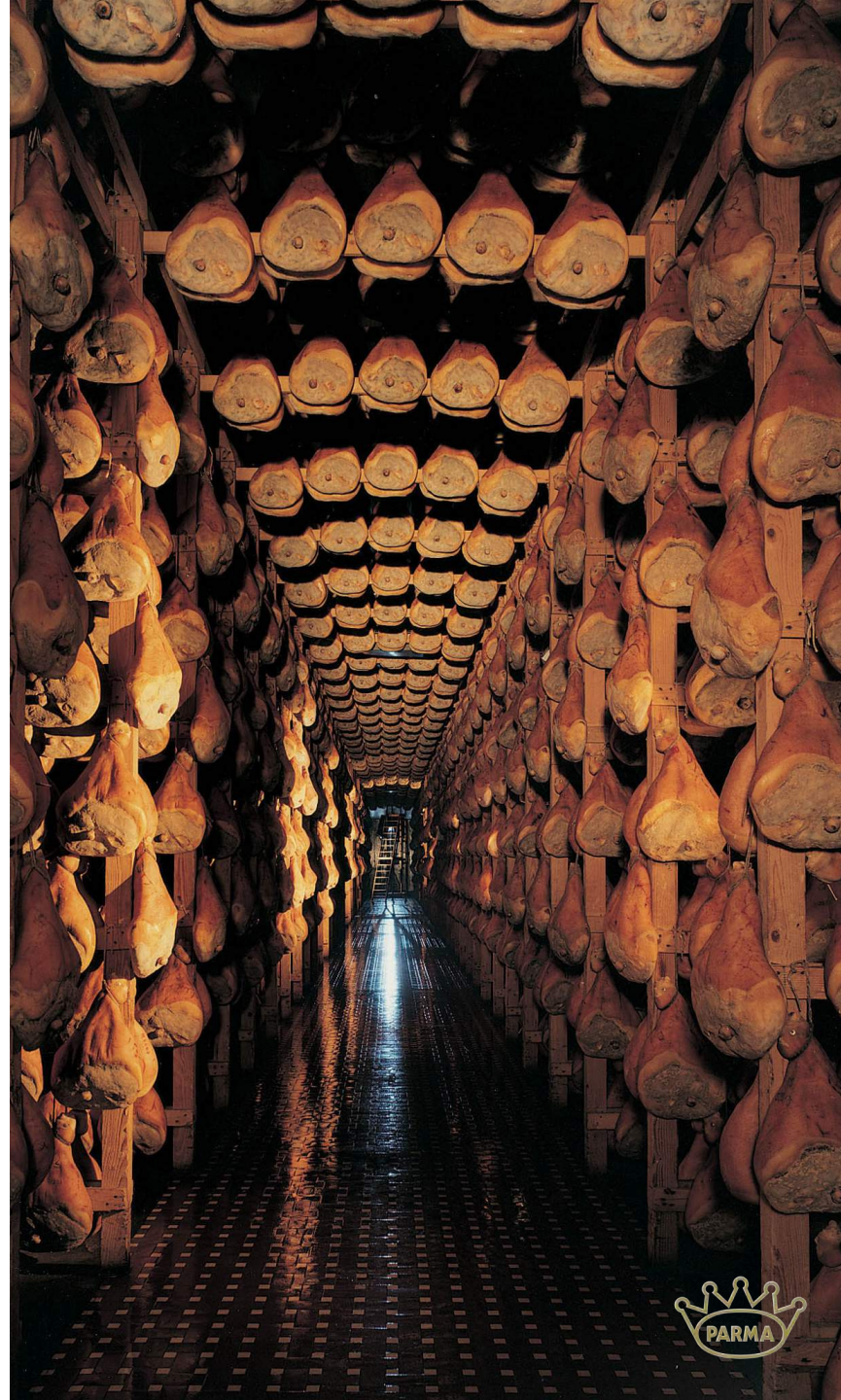
THE GREASING

After about four months, the exposed surfaces of the meat are coated with lard to soften them and help control the rate of moisture loss.



FINAL CURING

The hams are then transferred to cellars to age for a minimum of five months. Gradually the hams lose about 30% of their total weight, which helps concentrate the flavor.



THE TRADITIONAL QUALITY TEST FOR PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA





PASSING THE FINAL TEST

After 400 days, it is time for the quality check. Only hams that meet the high standards of the Consorzio become Prosciutto di Parma. An inspector pierces the ham in several locations with a horse bone needle, sniffing it after each puncture.

THE FIRE BRANDING

If the ham possesses the sweet-savory fragrance typical of Prosciutto di Parma, it is fire branded with the world-famous, five-pointed Parma Crown, which identifies it as genuine Prosciutto di Parma.

If there isn't a crown, it isn't Prosciutto di Parma.



WORKING WITH PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA



PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA IN THE U.S.

Most hams sold here are deboned and vacuum-packed whole, or are pre-sliced and packaged in Parma.

Bone-in legs are also sold, most of which are hand-sliced to order or used in foodservice destinations.

For retail customers interested in pre-sliced, advise them to look for the iconic gold Parma Crown in the upper-left corner against a black triangle.





STORAGE & CARE

Taking care of the product can extend its shelf life and preserve the flavor of Prosciutto di Parma for months after purchase.

The minute you receive the leg:

- Always check the tags and label to confirm the product is Prosciutto di Parma.
- Immediately refrigerate regardless if bone-in or boneless.
- A vacuum-packed leg is best if used within 12 months of deboning, refrigerated at 40-45°F. Once the vacuum seal is broken and slicing begins, the ham can be held under refrigeration for up to two months.

Note: NEVER place a leg of Prosciutto di Parma in a freezer.

WHEN YOU OPEN A BONELESS LEG

A boneless leg should not have mold when it arrives. If it does, do not use the product. It has most likely spoiled.

Remove the plastic and start trimming the fat. Be careful not to remove too much of the fat. You only want to trim the pieces that have been oxidized.

A layer of fat is necessary because it's what gives the slices of Prosciutto di Parma their rich, sweet, smooth flavor.



MAINTAINING YOUR BONELESS LEG

Regardless of how long you are using the product, it is best to wrap the leg in plastic wrap and keep it refrigerated between uses.

Keep the leg away from strong aromas like onions, which can affect the flavor, as well as the oven and hot surfaces. If the leg reaches a warmer temperature and then cools back off, it can become rancid.

A boneless leg can last up to two months if properly handled and maintained while in use.



SLICING

Always slice Prosciutto di Parma to order – never in advance.

Unless directly specified, it should be sliced paper thin – no more than 1/16 of an inch. Ideally, it should be translucent when held up to light.

NEVER slice prosciutto with the skin on it.



WHEN YOU OPEN A BONE-IN LEG

A bone-in leg may have mold when it arrives.

Don't worry – this is normal and a natural part of the curing process. If you notice mold on the leg, wipe it off using a mixture of water and sea salt.

Bone-in legs can be shipped in plastic or without (because it is a live product and still curing). If it arrives in plastic, we recommend you dry it for at least a week before using it.



MAINTAINING YOUR BONE-IN LEG

A bone-in leg doesn't have as many restrictions as a boneless leg because it has usually been cured longer.

You can leave a bone-in leg unrefrigerated for up to five hours as long as it's away from the oven or hot surfaces. The older the leg, the longer it can stay outside of the refrigerator.

To preserve the leg longer, cover the exposed part of the leg in between uses with the piece of skin you removed during prep, wrap the entire leg in plastic wrap and refrigerate.



COOKING TIPS

Prosciutto di Parma is a completely natural food with nothing added except salt. Its distinct sweet flavor is an alluring component in any recipe.

Encourage retail customers to pair it with fruit or bread, or serve it alone.

The end piece of the leg should be savored. Offer it to customers who want a thick slice of prosciutto, or want to boost the flavor of soups and pastas.

Prosciutto di Parma also is the perfect partner for craft beer or white wine.



THE WHOLE LEG

Using the whole leg of Prosciutto di Parma is a win-win for chefs and food professionals because it offers opportunities to reduce food waste and increase profits.

Incorporating different parts of the leg in your menu allows you to get the most value from your purchase and provides inspiration to be more creative in your recipes.



THE SKIN

Leathery and earthy in texture, the skin protects the meat from oxidation. And although it's a rarely used part, typically only used in a classic *cotiche e fagioli* recipe, it can be used in other ways too, including stocks, brodos, braise and added to sausage or beans.



THE CENTER

The center of the leg offers a delicate flavor with a mix of salty and sweet (given by the fat). It can be enjoyed thinly sliced, or diced for pastas, salads and more.



END PIECE/ TOP END

The top part of the leg near the bone is characterized by a sweet and complex flavor.

It is best used ground for spreads or meatballs, added to pasta or vegetables, and simmered for stocks or brodos.



THE FAT

The fat is an important part of the slice and should not be removed when slicing the ham.

However, when using the ham in recipes where the fat is not needed, you can use the fat as a replacement for butter. Whip and add to a crostini or use as a marinade with herbs and spices.

The fat can also be used in sauces and stews to create a heartier, buttery flavor, a perfect complement to creamy dishes or vegetables.



THE BOTTOM

The bottom of the leg has a drier texture when the leg is first cut because it is where the salt from curing is most concentrated.

This part of the leg is also a bit more nutty in flavor due to the whey used in the pig feed from the cheese production.

This section is thicker, making it ideal for pasta fillings. However, it can still be used for slicing.



THE BONE

The bone is characterized by an earthy essence and is best used in broths, sauces, soups and stews to give them a full-bodied taste.

For a more intense flavor, you can either roast the bone before simmering, or add the surrounding scraps of meat and fat to the broth for an even more intense dish.



TOOLS



SMALL BUTCHER KNIFE OR PAIRING KNIFE

Necessary for removing the skin from the leg, as well as any oxidized parts, to prep the leg for slicing.



SLICER

A handcrank slicer is ideal for slicing. It's manually operated and creates consistent, paper thin slices.

These beautiful machines can be used in front of patrons for an added restaurant experience.

An electric slicer can be used for thin, smooth slices of prosciutto. The best slicers for Prosciutto di Parma have a vertical blade 1 foot in diameter.



MORSA

A metal stand used to hold the leg in place for display and hand-slicing.



LONG FLAT SKINNY KNIFE

Allows you to slice across the bone-in leg in one fluid, natural movement. Blade must be flexible to glide naturally with the movement of a hand.





CUSTOMERS' TOUGH QUESTIONS

Are the pigs treated humanely?

What are the pigs fed?

Can you cut the prosciutto for me without the fat on it?

Why is Prosciutto di Parma so expensive?

Is it safe for pregnant women to consume?



CUSTOMERS' TOUGH QUESTIONS

How long can I keep prosciutto stored in my refrigerator before it goes bad?

How can I tell if it becomes unsafe to eat?

What is the recommended amount/serving size?

What are those crystals in the sliced prosciutto?

THANK YOU

Questions?

