

Kicked-up Pulled Pork (Including Jack and Coke BBQ Sauce Recipe)

My pulled pork has proven to be a crowd-pleaser time and time again. The recipe is a simple one, but it's still an all day process—that's the point of barbeque. I include in this post tips that not only are helpful for barbeque in general.

Ingredients:

Approx. 2Kg/4.5 lb Pork butt roast (shoulder), bone in

BBQ rub (Store-bought or recipe below)

Olive oil

Apple juice

Time: approximately 6 hours in slow-cooker, then 2 hours smoked.

For smoking:

1 cup wood chips (I use a 60/30/10 mix of Hickory, Applewood and Mesquite)

4 cups water and 1 shot whisk(e)y.

A few hours prior to smoking you want your pork to be rubbed down and back in the fridge. To prepare a good butt, you need to trim back the fat cap—the big yellow-white blob on the top, you can't miss it. Don't trim all the way down to the meat--Leave a little, because fat=flavour.

When you're ready to start, rub the butt down with a bit of olive oil—this stops your butt from sticking to the slow-cooker, and helps the spices stick to the meat. Then, rub it down with your BBQ rub—you want a thin crust over the entire roast without any big crumbly bits. Pop it in the fridge for at least a couple hours—though overnight is okay, too—and when you're ready to roll, take it out and leave it on the counter for 45 minutes or so: room-temperature meat cooks more evenly.

Set your butt (fat side up) in the slow-cooker, set it to low, and pop the lid on it. Resist the urge to lift the lid to check on it: most of them are glass for a reason.

After 6 hours, take your roast out of the slow-cooker, and set it on a tray for 30 minutes or so until it's warm (but not hot) to the touch. At this point, rub it down with your apple juice—it'll add a bit of sweetness and moisture before it hits the smoker.

Smoking:

Soak your wood chips in your whiskey/water mixture for at least a day. Strain the chips, and get ready for smoking—use any method you like, but the temperature CANNOT exceed 125 degrees celsius, as meat fibres start to break down at 140 and smoke will not penetrate them at that point.

I usually make a small aluminium foil packet full of my smoking chips and then just throw that on the drip tray of a charcoal or propane grill. Keep an eye on it every 20 minutes or so to make sure the temperature stays adequately low, but don't open the grill unless you need to stoke or rake it to adjust the temperature. Smoke it for 1.5-2 hours until you start to get a nice- crisp bark on the outside, but it still gives a little when you poke it. Let it rest for 25 minutes, then pull it apart with tongs or 2 forks—it should practically melt into pieces by this point. If I'm bringing it to a party, I'll load the pork and sauce into a slow-cooker and leave it on "warm" for serving. If you're serving it immediately, just heat the sauce on a stove and mix your pork into it. I use about 2 cups of sauce for a 2kg roast.

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BBQ spice rub recipe:

4 tablespoons seasoned salt
2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
1 1/2 tablespoons granulated sugar
1 1/2 tablespoons smoked paprika
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1 pinch ground ginger

Mix thoroughly. Store in airtight container for up to 2 months.

Jack and Coke Barbeque Sauce Recipe:

Jack Daniels, about 1/2 cup or to taste
1 cup Coke
1/2 cup minced onion
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 cups tomato ketchup
1/3 cup malt vinegar
3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
3/4 cup molasses
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 tablespoon salt
1/4 cup tomato paste
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 teaspoon your preferred hot sauce, or to taste

Combine Jack Daniels, Coke, onion and garlic in a sauce pan over medium heat. Whisk often and simmer until reduced by about half.

Add ketchup, malt vinegar, Worcestershire, molasses, salt, pepper, paprika, tomato paste and hot sauce. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Allow to cook uncovered until thickened and reduced to sauce consistency (this should take about 15-20 minutes), stirring constantly. Can and store for up to 5 months, or place in plastic container and store in the fridge for up to a month. Or just eat it all with a spoon. I won't judge.