



# KANSAS CITY-STYLE PULLED PORK

**SERVES:** 10 TO 12 | **PREP TIME:** 30 MINUTES | **GRILLING TIME:** ABOUT 5½ HOURS | **RESTING TIME:** 1 HOUR

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** CHARCOAL GRILL; 4 LARGE HANDFULS APPLE, CHERRY, OR HICKORY WOOD CHUNKS; LARGE DISPOSABLE FOIL PAN; SPRAY BOTTLE FILLED WITH WATER; HEAVY-DUTY ALUMINUM FOIL; INSTANT-READ THERMOMETER

*In big cities, small towns, and tiny neighborhoods across America, pulled pork appears in styles as varied and multicultural as the people living there. One style that everyone seems to like (love, actually) hails from Kansas City, where generously spiced shoulder meat is barbecued to fall-apart tenderness and coated in a sauce of sweet and spicy complexity with a touch of smokiness. That's Kansas City-style: a little bit of everything delicious.*



Don't rush it. The path to great pulled pork requires a fire that burns ever so slowly at temperatures between 225° and 250°F. If you cook it hotter than that, the muscles tend to seize up and push out moisture. If the temperature is consistently just right, the collagen in the meat will melt into juicy, delicious gelatin. That's what makes barbecued meat moist. One clever way of achieving this succulence is with the "snake method" (for setup instructions, see page 76). Essentially, you create an arc of charcoal briquettes and wood along one side of the grill and light the charcoal on one end of the "snake" only. The briquettes and wood burn gradually over time, rather than all at once, so the fire never gets too high or too low and you shouldn't need to add any more fuel.



## RUB

- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup smoked paprika
- 4 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2½ teaspoons prepared chili powder
- 2½ teaspoons garlic powder
- 2½ teaspoons onion powder
- 1½ teaspoons coarsely ground black pepper
- ½–1 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper

- 1 boneless pork shoulder roast (Boston butt), 4 to 5 pounds, trimmed of excess fat and silver skin, rolled and tied

## SAUCE

- 3 slices bacon
- ½ medium yellow onion, finely diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup ketchup
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- ½ cup cider vinegar
- ¼ cup tomato paste
- ¼ cup prepared chili powder
- 2 tablespoons packed light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon unsulfured molasses (not blackstrap)
- 1 tablespoon liquid smoke
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon celery salt
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

- 1 Mix the rub ingredients, and then season the roast all over with the rub. Allow the roast to stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before grilling.
- 2 Prepare the charcoal grill for indirect cooking over very low heat (225° to 250°F) using the snake method (see photo at left and setup instructions on page 76). When the temperature of the grill reaches



225°F, grill the roast, fat side down, over **indirect very low heat**, with the lid closed, for 4 hours, adjusting the top vent so the temperature of the grill stays as close to 225°F as possible. At the start of every hour, after the first hour, lightly spray the roast with water.

- 3 Meanwhile, make the sauce. In a medium, heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat on the stove, fry the bacon until browned and most of the fat is rendered out. Using a slotted spoon, remove the bacon. Leave 2 to 3 tablespoons of bacon fat in the pan. Eat the bacon or save for another use. Add the onion and cook until soft and translucent, 3 to 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring occasionally to prevent it from burning. Whisk in the

remaining sauce ingredients, bring to a simmer over medium heat, and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Set aside to cool. Once the sauce has cooled, pour into a blender and blend until smooth. Separate the sauce into two containers. One half will be used for basting the roast before wrapping it in foil. The other half will be mixed with the pulled pork.

- 4 After 4 hours, use an instant-read thermometer to check the internal temperature of the roast. If it has not reached 160°F, continue cooking until it does. Once the roast has reached 160°F, remove it from the grill. Put the lid back on the grill to prevent heat loss.
- 5 On a large work surface, crisscross two sheets of heavy-duty aluminum foil, each

about 3 feet long. Place the roast in the center of the foil, fat side up. Lightly brush the roast all over with the sauce. Bring the ends of the inner sheet together, folding on top of the roast. Then bring the ends of the outer sheet together, wrapping the roast tightly to trap the steam. Return the roast to the grill and cook over **indirect very low heat**, with the lid closed, until the internal temperature reaches 190° to 195°F, about 1½ hours. Remove from the grill and let rest, still in the foil, for 1 hour.

- 6 Unwrap the roast and, when cool enough to handle, pull the meat apart to shred it. Discard any large pieces of fat and sinew. Moisten the meat with as much sauce as you like. Serve immediately.