



Winedog Speaks

It Ain't Supposed to be Purty!

I've got a hand written, tattered notebook that I've been carrying around for the last 30 years and its worth more to me than words could ever express. It contains over a quarter century's worth of kitchen notes and recipes gleaned from dozens of people who shared a common interest in great foods and showing love to people by feeding them.

Now that I think about it one of the greatest things about that notebook is the way it makes me slip away to the moment in time when I connected with someone. Many of those people are gone now but their presence is as fresh and vital as the day we talked because of their gifts of great food ideas.

As I write this we are in the middle of a Memorial Day weekend and two things come to mind. This weekend is the traditional time of year that we fire up our grills to celebrate the gathering of friends over good food and it is a time that we are called to take a moment to remember and celebrate those we have known and loved in our lives.

Enter a colorful group of characters sprouted out of the sandy soil of Garner, North Carolina, along with tobacco (backy), okra, butter beans, sweet corn and turnip greens. I encountered my first Carolina pulled pork barbecue thanks to my wife, blessed to be "Born in the South", and a whole entourage of individuals in her family and their circle of dear friends.

As I looked on in awe at an impressive mound of North Carolina pulled pork on a fresh Kaiser roll one of my new found friends, obviously trying to help the Yankee understand what he was about to feast on, slapped me on the back and said, "It ain't supposed to be purty, it's barbecue."

As far as I'm concerned, it's downright gorgeous and a perfect recipe to bring to the table during grilling and smoking season. Here's a traditional North Carolina Pulled Pork Barbecue recipe that's "better 'n snuff and not half as dusty!"

Carolina Style Vinegar Sauce

(Makes about 6 cups)

Can be made ahead of time and will hold in the refrigerator for several weeks.

Ingredients:

- 6 cups distilled white vinegar**
- 3 tablespoons salt, or to taste**
- 3 tablespoons sugar**
- 3 tablespoons freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 tablespoons hot red pepper flakes, or more to taste**
- 3 tablespoons hot sauce (Tabasco or Texas Pete)**

Put the vinegar, salt, sugar, black pepper, hot red pepper flakes, and hot sauce in a large non reactive bowl, add one cup of water and whisk until the salt and sugar dissolve. Taste the seasoning, adding more salt and/or hot red pepper flakes as needed. If holding in the refrigerator be sure to bring to room temperature before serving.

Here's a great recipe for the pulled pork that can be made by indirect grilling or smoking.

For your rub:

4 teaspoons sweet paprika

1 tablespoon brown sugar

1 tablespoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

1 teaspoon white pepper

1 teaspoon dry mustard

1 teaspoon garlic powder

½ to 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

You'll need:

1 Boston Butt (bone-in pork shoulder roast; 5 to 7 pounds)

Vinegar sauce (see above)

10 to 12 hamburger buns, I use Kaiser Rolls

Combine your rub ingredients and using your hands (you may need rubber gloves if your skin is sensitive) apply the rub evenly over your roast and work it into the pork by gently massaging. Set up your grill for indirect grilling with a pan underneath your roast to catch the drippings and your heat on high.



Prepare a smokers pouch of aluminum foil filled with 4 cups of wood chips, hickory is best, that have been soaked in water. Punch some holes in the pouch and place it directly on your coals or over your gas grill heating elements and run on high until the smoke begins to roll out of the holes. Reduce heat to medium low.

Place your roast (skin side up if applicable) over the drip pan and cook until it is dark brown on the outside and very tender inside, about 4 to 6 hours. Your instant read thermometer should read 195°F when inserted and the meat should be very well done. If it starts to brown too much during cooking you can always loosely cover with foil for remaining of the cook time.

Transfer pork to a cutting board, cover it loosely with foil, and let it rest for 20 minutes. Using your hand pull the pork into large pieces, discarding the bones and lumps of fat. Further break down the pork with two forks or your finger tips until it is finely shredded. You can also use a meat cleaver to chop the pork if you prefer.

Transfer the pulled pork to an aluminum pan and add 1 ½ cups of your vinegar based sauce and toss. Serve the rest of your sauce on the side for individuals to add based on personal preference.

Never...I mean never...serve pulled pork without coleslaw. It simply is not done!

Let me know how your first batch turns out. I'd love to hear from you. Have a wonderful week and I'll see you next time. Cheers.

Allison, a native of Warren County in Southwestern Ohio, has been in the fine wine and fine dining field for 31 years in the South Florida, Chicago and Southwestern Ohio markets. He writes a weekly syndicated column, manages a fine wine business and is the executive chef for Winedog Fine Wines and Catering Services. You can visit his column archive at www.winedog.com and take your comments and questions directly to him at 888-288-0668 or email him at winedog@winedog.com. He has resided with his wife and two sons since 1999 in the country outside of Morrow, Ohio

