

COOKING FOR
COMFORT

FEEL-GOOD PORK RECIPES,
CLASSIC TO CONTEMPORARY



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PorkBeInspired.com

FEATURING CHEF MICHELLE BERNSTEIN, CHEF RAY LAMPE
AND LEADING FOOD BLOGGERS

CLASSIC FEEL-GOOD
WARM FAVORITE GO-TO
MEMORABLE SHAREABLE
SAVORY FRESH
SATISFYING
FROM MY KITCHEN
FAVORITE
TRADITION
NOSTALGIC
SOOTHING TWIST

COOKING FOR
COMFORT

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Foreword

I'll always remember my mother cooking for us when I was young. The one dish that brings me back to that place is her fresh potato gnocchi with pork Ragu – for every big occasion, I'd ask her to make it. It's a recipe that makes me happy; those are moments I think about fondly. Today, when I haven't had enough sleep and the baby's not happy with me and there are so many things I need to do, there is nothing that makes me feel better than a plate of something I grew up with, like that pork Ragu. It feels like home.

To me, that's what comfort food does – it brings us back to our childhood; it grounds us and it humbles us. It's simple, approachable and whimsical. When you smell something that triggers a food memory – something you grew up with and loved – and that dish brings that memory back to you, I don't think anything can comfort you more.

Pork is so incredibly comforting because it's so versatile, and so easy to make well – whether you're slow cooking or roasting or grilling. You can braise big chunks with your favorite flavors and let it cook on the stove for hours – it'll come out deliciously, meltingly tender. You can roast a whole pork shoulder – throw it in the oven at a nice low temperature and it'll come out just ready to be sliced and delightfully juicy. You can toss sausage, bacon or hearty ham into a casserole for a quick and cozy family meal that is full of flavor and is equally as inviting and approachable.

No matter how it's prepared, comfort food is magical. It brings us together in the kitchen; it inspires us to share recipes old and new; to tell stories that make us laugh or even cry; to create memories of moments and flavors that last a lifetime.

Chef Michelle Bernstein



Across the world, we've relied on our favorite foods to make us feel good – so good that we remember that meal (and the wonderfully soothing aromas associated with it) for years.

To help inspire more of these moments, we've compiled a collection of recipes that honors all the ways you can create that quintessential feel-good dish with flavorful, versatile pork. James Beard Award-winning Chef Michelle Bernstein, BBQ expert Chef Ray Lampe and 10 leading food bloggers have shared their favorite dishes from both past and present – savory, satisfying recipes that celebrate just how special comfort food really is – along with the personal thoughts and family photos that tell the story behind them.

We hope you'll cherish this collection no matter the season, no matter the occasion and no matter the setting. As long as you're in the mood to feel good, you'll find something delicious in the following pages that will help you get cozy with pork.

pork
Be inspired®

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Our Contributors

Meet our featured contributor Chef Michelle Bernstein, a James Beard Award winner and the owner of two restaurants in Miami – Michy’s and Crumb on Parchment. Together with Chef Ray Lampe and our 10 contributing food bloggers, Chef Bernstein shared her interpretation of comfort food, her passion for pork and the stories that accompany her favorite dishes through recipes from the past and present.



Chef Michelle Bernstein



Since the pivotal Mango Gang era in the late 80’s and early 90’s, almost no other Miami chef has made as big a splash on the national culinary scene as Chef Michelle Bernstein. A Miami native, this passionate culinair has dazzled diners and critics alike with her sublime cuisine and a personality as bright and vibrant as the Florida sun. “My food is luxurious but approachable,” says Bernstein, a James Beard Award winner (Best Chef South 2007) and author of “Cuisine a Latina” (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt 2008).

“My food is luxurious but approachable.”

The seeds of Chef Bernstein’s career were planted at a young age. A former professional ballerina and honors graduate of Johnson & Wales University, Bernstein captured national attention in the late 1990’s as executive chef of Tantra on Miami Beach, which she helped catapult to international fame. In 2001, she took the helm of Azul at the Mandarin Oriental Miami, drawing acclaim for her sophisticated haute cuisine. That same year she joined the Food Network as co-host of the “Melting Pot,” where she introduced food enthusiasts to the art of Nuevo Latino Cuisine. She returned to the Food Network to battle Bobby Flay on “Iron Chef America,” from which she emerged victorious; she regularly appears as a judge on Bravo’s award-winning show, “Top Chef”; is a frequent guest on the “Today Show” and is the host of her PBS weekly television series, “Check, Please! South Florida.”



Chef Ray Lampe

drbbq.com

A Chicago native, Ray Lampe has been participating in barbeque cook-offs as a hobby since 1982 – but it wasn’t until 2000 that he decided to take a leap and turn his passion for barbeque into a career. After spending 25 years in the family trucking business, Ray moved to Florida to focus on becoming an outdoor cooking expert. Today, he is a barbeque champion otherwise known as “Dr. BBQ.” He appears as an expert judge and host on myriad TV shows – including the “Ultimate BBQ Showdown” on CBS Sports and “Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives” on the Food Network – and is also the author of seven cookbooks, including his most recent, “Pork Chop.”



Ali Ebright

gimmesomeoven.com

This food writer-photographer-stylist’s philosophy on life and food are one and the same – good things are meant to be celebrated and shared. Ali loves to create simple, affordable, creative, seasonal and delicious recipes that can be enjoyed around the table. While most of her recipes tend to fall in the “quick and easy” category, she’ll invest more time in a meal for a special occasion. When she’s not cooking, Ali loves book-clubbing, dog-walking, world-traveling, music-playing and life-living in Kansas City.



Carrian Cheney

ohsweetbasil.com

A resident of Salt Lake City, Carrian started her food blog as a way to educate and inspire people about cooking at home again. She genuinely believes that making your own food is not only healthier, less expensive and better for you, but it’s an opportunity to be in the kitchen together with family and create memories that will last a lifetime. Together with her husband, Carrian enjoys spending time with their two children, traveling and trying as many new recipes as possible.



Cassie Laemml

bakeyourday.net

Cassie is a freelance recipe developer, food photographer and writer who lives in Jefferson City, Missouri. Her blog celebrates her love for food, for people and for life – especially living well through food, which means creating wholesome meals and always leaving room for dessert. For Cassie, food is incredibly nostalgic and comforting, and she loves how it brings people together and builds communities. At home, her husband Paul is her other half, resident taste tester and No. 1 fan.



Danica Pike

danicasdaily.com



Whether she's enjoying a dish at a local restaurant in her home state of California or whipping up a crowd-pleasing, nutritious meal at home, Danica has a passion for all things food. She believes in and follows a health-conscious eating plan that centers on moderation, and she chronicles her culinary adventures daily. She loves to run, bike, stay active and otherwise enjoys any kind of exercise that doesn't feel like exercise.



Devi McDonald

diddlesanddumplings.com



A California resident, Devi is a wife, mother of two and the writer behind her food and recipe blog, where she provides her readers with home-style recipes to warm both their hearts and their bellies. Devi started cooking when she got married – and her slow cooker quickly became her best friend. Today, she loves motivating people to cook and helping her readers gain confidence in the kitchen, offering simple and delicious recipes to show the world that anyone can learn to cook amazing dishes at home.



Jenny Flake

picky-palate.com



A self-taught cook and mother of three in Orange County, California, Jenny creates original recipes complete with food photography on her blog, where she loves sharing her journey with her readers. Her love for cooking began when she and her husband bought their first house and she realized she didn't have the slightest clue what to do in her new kitchen. After reading countless cookbooks and watching one cooking show after another, Jenny discovered her passion for creating her own recipes and, today, has participated in cooking competitions across the country.



Jenny Ingram

jennyonthespot.com



Self-entitled “chief creator and goof-off” at her blog, Jenny loves to experiment with new recipes – although she has a handful of go-to favorites she knows she can always count on – in Seattle, where she calls home. She has a knack for tickling the taste buds of the people she loves, and while blogging, she also strives to entertain, hoping her readers find themselves laughing, learning and laughing some more. All of Jenny's stories are filtered through her funny bone.



Katie Jasiewicz

katiescucina.com



A home cook, food blogger and recipe developer based in Orlando, Katie has always had a passion for cooking – and, of course, a passion for eating. On her blog, she takes her readers on a culinary adventure to ensure their life always tastes good. Katie learned how to cook when she was just 9 years old, when her mother worked nights and her father was deployed to the Gulf War. After quickly growing tired of eating babysitter-prepared microwaved dinners, she started to experiment in the kitchen and, to this day, she continues to cook, creating new recipes each week.



Lauren Brennan

laurenlatest.com



Lauren is a wife and mother who lives a happy, big life in Portland on a small budget. On her little corner of the food blogosphere, she truly believes that anyone can turn ordinary ingredients into extraordinary food. Every day, she takes common, everyday ingredients and transforms them into simple and easy meals that look fancy, taste great and are totally doable for the home cook.



Meagan Wied

azestybite.com



A big supporter of moderation and not depriving yourself of the foods you love, Meagan posts old and new family favorites on her food blog, including both healthier and more indulgent dishes. A stay-at-home mom and Lubbock, Texas resident, her ultimate dream is to one day own her own restaurant or bakery – and she believes you can't go wrong with bacon, bread, chocolate and dessert. Meagan's husband, Shaun, enjoys being her sous chef, official taste tester and professional dishwasher.

PEOPLE-PLEASING

COMFORT FOOD PAST

Comfort foods can be warm and toasty; savory and satisfying; fulfilling and full-flavored. They can also take us back to our past – to a time when we were surrounded by our loved ones and friends, enjoying that craved comfort food dish and creating our most memorable moments. This section offers an original collection of pork recipes that features traditional, tried-and-true cooking methods and heritage feel-good dishes – dishes that will satisfy with wonderful flavors and inspire delicious memories for generations to come.

Spicy Pork Meatballs
with Creamy Sweet Potato Sauce



Spicy Pork Meatballs with Creamy Sweet Potato Sauce

1 pound ground pork
2 large sweet potatoes (about 2 pounds)
1 large egg
3/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese, divided
1/3 cup seasoned breadcrumbs
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley, plus more for garnish
1 tablespoon dried rubbed sage
2 teaspoons red pepper flakes
1 1/2 teaspoons salt, divided
1/4 cup vegetable oil, divided

1 pound rigatoni pasta
1 1/2 cups half and half
3/4 cup milk, or more as needed
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
1/2 sweet onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

Bake the sweet potatoes until tender, 50 to 60 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl combine the ground pork, egg, 1/2 cup of cheese, breadcrumbs, parsley, sage, red pepper flakes and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Form the mixture into golf ball-sized meatballs, arranging them on a plate or platter.

In a large skillet over medium heat, warm 2 tablespoons oil. Add the meatballs in a single layer, making sure they're not touching, and cook, turning occasionally, until browned and cooked through, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer the meatballs to a paper towel-lined plate, cover to keep warm and set aside.

Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain, cover to keep warm and set aside.

Scoop the flesh from the sweet potatoes, place it in a food processor and pulse a few times. Slowly add the half and half and milk, processing until smooth. Set aside.

Wipe out the skillet, place it over medium heat, and warm the butter and 2 tablespoons of oil. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is tender, about 5 minutes. Whisk in the flour and cook for 1 minute. Whisk in the sweet potato mixture, black pepper, nutmeg, and 1 teaspoon salt and cook until the sauce is thickened and heated through, 3 to 4 minutes. If the sauce is too thick, add more milk as needed. Whisk in 1/4 cup of cheese. Add the rigatoni, stirring until it's heated through.

Serve the pasta topped with the meatballs and garnished with chopped parsley.

Yield: 8 servings

“This feel-good pork meatball dish has changed a bit from when I grew up – but it still brings me back to those cozy, magical nights.”

– Devi McDonald





Michelle Bernstein

CHEF MICHELLE
BERNSTEIN MAKES
EMPANADAS

Chorizo & Cheese Empanadas with Avocado Crema



“My mother taught me to make empanadas when I was 5. To me, they’re still comforting. A couple of years ago, I started making my own chorizo – the perfect filling for my mom’s empanadas. I was surprised at how easy it was, and you can add your own personality to it with different flavors. With the addition of farmer’s cheese, they’re irresistible.”

– Chef Michelle Bernstein

Chorizo & Cheese Empanadas with Avocado Crema

1 pound ground pork
2 pasilla chiles, or other mild dried red chiles*
1 guajillo chile, or other mild dried red chile*
1 onion, cut into large chunks
4 tablespoons cider vinegar
2 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon sweet paprika
2 teaspoons dried oregano, preferably Mexican
2 teaspoons salt, plus more to taste
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 pound queso blanco or other mild, semi-hard cheese, grated
Empanada dough (available at porkbeinspired.com) or store-bought empanada shells to make about 48 6-inch or 64 5-inch empanadas*
All-purpose flour, for the work surface
About 6 cups canola oil

Avocado crema:
1 avocado, peeled, pitted and chopped
Juice of 1/2 lime
3 tablespoons sour cream
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup roughly chopped cilantro
Salt to taste



In a large skillet over medium-high heat, toast the chiles, turning occasionally, until blistered and fragrant, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer the chiles to a bowl of hot water, cover and set aside for 15 minutes.

Remove the chiles from the water and stem and seed them. Place the chiles, onion, vinegar and garlic in the bowl of a food processor or the jar of a blender and process to purée, scraping down the bowl or jar as needed.

Transfer the chile mixture to a large bowl and add the pork, paprika, oregano, salt, coriander, cumin, pepper and cinnamon, mixing until well combined. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

In a large skillet over medium heat, cook the pork mixture, breaking it up with a spoon or spatula, until no longer pink, 5 to 6 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly.

Meanwhile, in the bowl of a food processor, combine avocado, cilantro, sour cream, lime juice and olive oil and process to purée, scraping down the bowl as necessary. Add salt to taste and set aside in the refrigerator.

Stir the cheese into the pork mixture. Arrange a 5- or 6-inch round of empanada dough or an empanada shell on a lightly floured work surface. Spoon 1 1/2 to 2 tablespoons of pork mixture on top, moisten the edges of the shell with water, and fold the shell over the filling, pressing it with a fork to seal. Repeat with the remaining shells and pork mixture, flouring the work surface as necessary.

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees F. Arrange two or three paper towel-lined baking sheets in the oven.

Pour canola oil into a large, heavy saucepan or small stockpot to 1-inch deep and warm it to 350 degrees F. over medium heat. Cook the empanadas in batches, turning occasionally and adjusting the heat to maintain 350 degrees F., until golden, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to the prepared baking sheets to keep warm.

Serve the empanadas with the avocado crema on the side.

*Look for dried chiles in the ethnic section of your supermarket and at Latin markets. Look for empanada shells—preferably muy hojadrosa (“very flaky”) style—at Latin markets, at gourmet food stores, and online. To find the recipe for Chef Bernstein’s Empanada Dough, visit PorkBeinspired.com

Yield: 48 to 64 empanadas

“Every year, my grandpa cooked for the big fair. He’d inject pork with his famous BBQ sauce and bury it in the ground to roast all night. We’ve passed on his recipe and stories – and I eat a lot of his pork because it makes me feel close to a man I never knew – and it’s darn good, too.”

–Carrian Cheney



Grandpa’s Favorite BBQ Pork

- 1 3 1/2-pound blade (shoulder) boneless pork roast*
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/3 cup diced onion
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/3 cup lemon juice or cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons prepared mustard
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

Special equipment: Meat injector

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the ketchup, water, lemon juice, brown sugar, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and salt and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool.

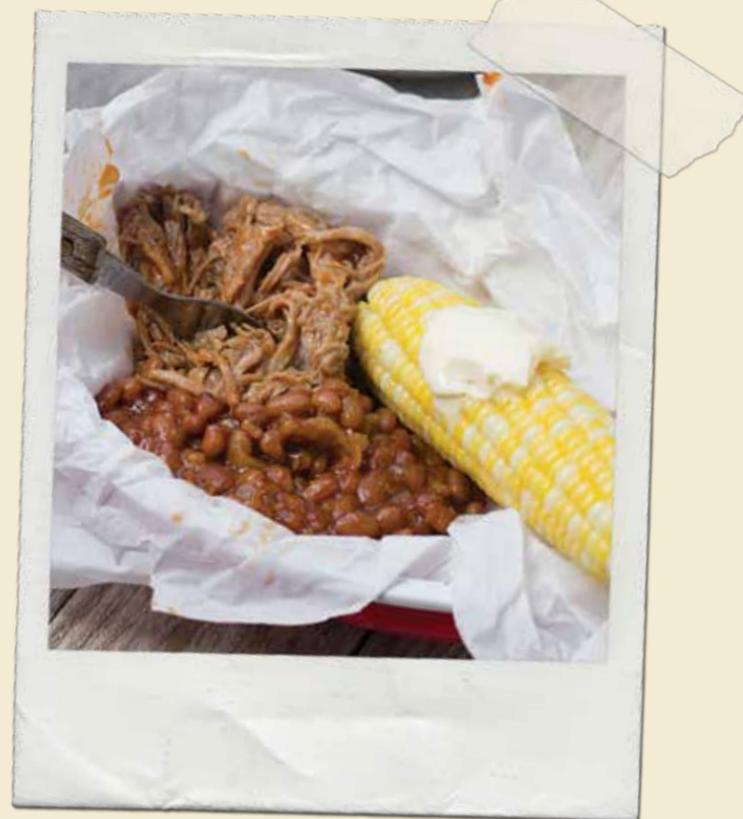
Place the pork in a slow cooker. Reserve 1 cup of the sauce and set the remaining aside in the refrigerator. Use a meat injector to inject the 1 cup of sauce into the meat, piercing it all over 6 to 10 times (depending on your meat injector, you may need to strain the sauce first). Cover the meat and cook on low 6 to 8 hours, until the meat is very tender.

About 30 minutes before the meat is done, bring the remaining sauce to room temperature.

Serve the meat with the sauce.

*If the pork is tied with butcher’s string, leave the string on.

Yield: 8 to 10 servings



FAVORITE GO-TO

Lauren's Latest

Crockpot Rosemary Pork Loin

- 1 4-pound New York (boneless loin) pork roast
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed in your fingers
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

In a small bowl, combine the salt, garlic powder, pepper, rosemary and thyme. Place the pork in a slow cooker and rub all over with the oil. Rub the seasoning mixture all over the pork. Cover and cook on high until the internal temperature of the pork reaches between 145 degrees F. (medium rare), with a 3-minute rest, and 160 degrees F. (medium), about 2 3/4 hours.

Remove the pork from the slow cooker and let rest 15 minutes before slicing and serving.

Yield: 12 to 14 servings



“Every Sunday, I remember my mom inviting friends and family over for dinner after church. Every time we had company, she’d make her own version of this roasted pork – because it’s so simple to throw together, and everyone loves eating it.”

–Lauren Brennan



**FOUR
GENERATIONS!**



“One treat my husband grew up loving is his mom’s top-secret all meat, cheese and noodle lasagna. It’s total comfort on a plate, packed with cheesy goodness. My recipe puts a healthier twist on it. The secret’s in the sauce – I use lean spicy pork Italian sausage and red wine.”

– Danica Pike



Lasagna with Spicy Pork Italian Sausage

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 1/4 pounds lean ground pork | 2 cups sliced white mushrooms |
| 1/2 cup minced fresh parsley,
plus 1/2 cup roughly chopped fresh parsley or basil | 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes |
| 1/4 cup minced onion, plus 1 onion, diced | 1 14 1/2-ounce can diced tomatoes |
| 2 teaspoons ground paprika | 1 6-ounce can tomato paste |
| 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves | 1 cup dry red wine |
| 1 teaspoon ground fennel | 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning |
| 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes | 1 15-ounce container low-fat ricotta cheese |
| 1 teaspoon salt | 1 large egg |
| 1/4 teaspoon black pepper | 12 ounces no-boil lasagna noodles |
| 7 garlic cloves, minced, divided | 9 ounces finely shredded part-skim mozzarella |
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | 1 ounce fresh Parmesan cheese, shredded |

In a large bowl, combine the pork, minced parsley, minced onion, paprika, thyme, fennel, red pepper flakes, salt, black pepper and half the garlic. Set aside in the refrigerator.

In a large saucepan or small stockpot over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the diced onion, mushrooms and remaining garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in all the tomatoes (with their juices), wine and Italian seasoning. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, cover and cook for 1 hour.

After about 45 minutes, in a large skillet over medium heat, cook the pork mixture, breaking it up with a spoon or spatula, until no longer pink, 6 to 7 minutes.

Stir the cooked pork mixture into the tomato mixture, cover and simmer for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. In a medium bowl, combine the ricotta, egg and roughly chopped parsley or basil. Set aside.

Spray a 9x13-inch pan with nonstick spray and arrange 1/3 of the noodles on the bottom of the pan. Spread 1/3 of the tomato sauce over the noodles. Top with 1/3 of the ricotta mixture and 1/3 of the mozzarella. Add two more layers of noodles, tomato sauce, ricotta mixture and mozzarella. Top with the Parmesan cheese and bake uncovered until browned and heated through, 35 to 40 minutes.

Yield: 10 servings



HERITAGE



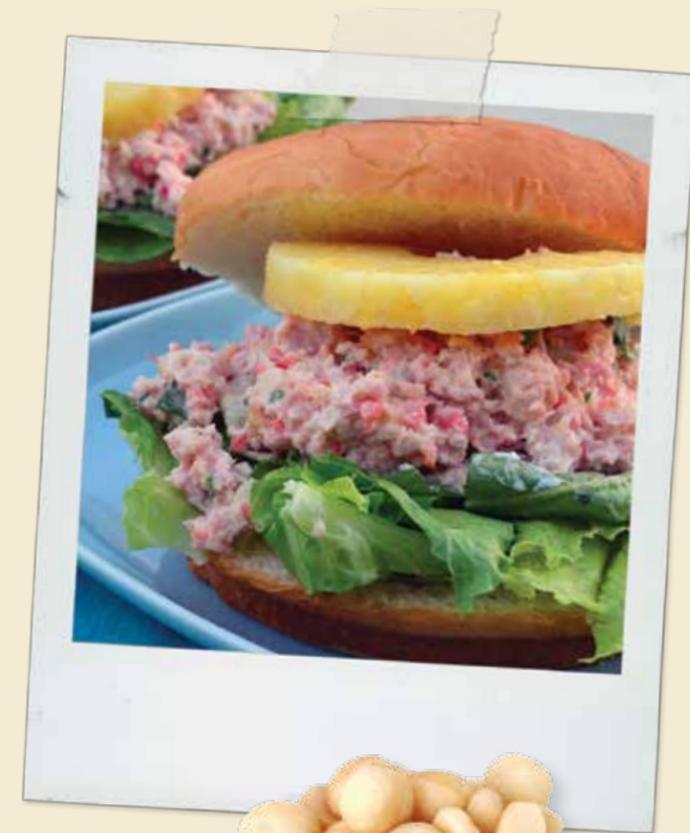
Tropical Ham Salad

- 1 to 1 1/2 cups diced ham
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons canned crushed pineapple
- 2 tablespoons macadamia nuts
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley leaves
- 2 teaspoons roughly diced red bell pepper
- 4 Hawaiian-style hamburger buns, split
- 4 slices pineapple, fresh or canned
- 4 lettuce leaves

In the bowl of a food processor, combine the ham and mayonnaise and pulse to blend, scraping down the bowl as necessary. Add the crushed pineapple, nuts, parsley and bell pepper and pulse to blend, scraping down the bowl as necessary. Set aside.

Arrange the lettuce on the bun bottoms. Top with the sliced pineapple, ham mixture and bun tops and serve.

Yield: 4 servings



“My mom always made ham salad with leftover ham from our holidays – she got the tradition from my grandmother, who’d constantly reinvent leftovers so her hungry children could try something new. I decided to modernize the recipe by giving it a tropical twist.”

– Katie Jasiewicz



Taco Soup



TRADITION



Taco Soup

- 1 1/2 pounds ground pork
- 2 onions, diced
- 1 1/4-ounce package taco seasoning mix
- 1 1-ounce package regular Ranch dip mix
- 1 10-ounce can diced tomatoes with chilies
- 1 14 1/2-ounce can stewed tomatoes or 2 fresh tomatoes, diced
- 2 15- to 16-ounce cans Ranch Style beans, kidney beans, hominy or a combination
- 2 11-ounce cans corn, ideally shoe peg (sweet corn)
- Salt and pepper
- Tortilla chips
- Diced or sliced avocado
- Sour cream
- Shredded Cheddar cheese

In a large saucepan or small stockpot over medium heat, cook the pork, breaking it up with a spoon or spatula, until no longer pink, 7 to 9 minutes. Stir in the onions, taco seasoning and dip mix. Stir in the tomatoes (both kinds, with their juices), beans (with their juices) and corn (with its juices). If necessary, add water to achieve desired consistency. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, reduce to a simmer, cover and cook for 15 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve the soup garnished with chips, avocado, sour cream and cheese.

Yield: 12 servings

“This soup was first made for me by my wonderful mother-in-law one chilly Christmas – she got the recipe from her sister. I made this delicious recipe for my wonderful mom during one of her visits and now, every time she comes, she asks me to make it.”

– Jenny Ingram



French Onion Pork Chops

- 4 4-ounce New York (boneless top loin) pork chops, about 1-inch thick
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cups halved, thinly sliced onions
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons water
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- 1 1-ounce package onion soup mix
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

In a medium skillet over medium heat, warm the oil. Stir in the onion. Stir in the salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in the water and sugar, reduce the heat to very low, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are deep golden brown, about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Spray an 8x8-inch baking pan with nonstick spray.

Arrange the onions in the bottom of the pan and the pork chops on top. In a small bowl, combine the broth, soup mix and pepper, then pour the mixture over the pork. Cover tightly with foil and bake until internal temperature of the pork reaches between 145 degrees F. (medium rare) and 160 degrees F. (medium), 40 to 45 minutes. Remove chops from pan and let rest 3 minutes.

Serve the chops with the onions and pan sauce spooned on top.

Yield: 4 servings

“My mom’s French onion soup pork chops with mashed potatoes and corn is at the top of my comfort food list. It was a staple growing up, and I still crave it today. I put my own spin on it, though, by adding caramelized onions – but I wouldn’t dream of eating it without the creamy mashed potatoes!”

– Cassie Laemmler



MEMORABLE

THE GIRLS



“There’s something so comforting about a bowl of homemade mac and cheese, and I have fond memories of making it with my mom and grandmother – we’d have fun adding in different ingredients. In this one, I’ve added crispy pieces of bacon and basil, which give the mac and cheese a unique flavor punch.”

– Jenny Flake

Bacon Pesto Mac & Cheese

- 1 1/2 pounds bacon, cut crosswise into 1/4-inch strips
- 1 pound elbow macaroni pasta
- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper, plus more to taste
- 3 cups whole milk, or more as needed
- 1 cup shredded mild Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 8 ounces prepared pesto

In a large skillet over medium heat, cook the bacon, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 15 to 18 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate. Set aside.

While the bacon is cooking, in a large saucepan or small stockpot, cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.

Wipe out the saucepan or small stockpot and return it to medium heat. Add the butter. When the butter is melted, sprinkle in the flour, salt and pepper and cook, whisking, for 2 minutes. Slowly add the milk, whisking. Continue cooking and whisking until the mixture thickens, about 3 minutes. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the cheeses.

Stir in the pasta and pesto. Set aside 1 cup of bacon and stir in the remaining bacon. Add more salt and pepper to taste.

Serve immediately, garnished with the reserved bacon. (If mixture gets too thick as it cools, stir in additional milk.)

Yield: 8 to 10 servings





Apple Cinnamon Pork Chops

- 4 Ribeye (rib) pork chops, bone-in, about 3/4-inch thick
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tablespoons butter, divided
- 2 apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 large white onion, halved and thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- Pinch ground cayenne pepper
- 2/3 cup apple cider
- 1/3 cup heavy cream

Generously season the chops with salt and pepper on both sides. Set aside.

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt 2 tablespoons of butter. Immediately add the pork chops and cook until brown, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate and set aside. Let chops rest for 3 minutes.

Return the skillet to medium-high heat and melt 1 tablespoon of butter. Immediately add the apples and onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Stir in the brown sugar, cinnamon and cayenne. Stir in the apple cider and cream. Add the pork chops, nestling them into the liquid, and cook until the internal temperature of the pork reaches between 145 degrees F. (medium rare), with a 3-minute rest, and 160 degrees F. (medium), 3 to 4 minutes per side.

Serve the chops with the apple mixture spooned on top.

Yield: 4 servings

“Growing up, my dad’s favorite comfort food was pork chops. He and my mom would grill up a batch while my sister and I baked cinnamon apples as a side. Today, I still love making pork chops with a little twist – sautéed cinnamon apples and onions on top.”

– Ali Ebright



NOSTALGIC



“My love for cooking and baking began at an early age, and I owe most of it to my grandmother. We’d gather around the table, which was loaded with homemade food and desserts. My favorite comfort food was her spaghetti – and in this recipe, I added a little twist.”

– Meagan Wied



Supreme Pizza Spaghetti

- 1 pound ground pork
- 8 ounces whole-wheat spaghetti
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 14 1/2-ounce can Italian-style diced tomatoes
- 1 large green bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup diced mushrooms
- 1 3.8-ounce can sliced black olives, drained
- 1 10 3/4-ounce can condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups shredded pizza or Italian blend cheese, divided
- 15 slices pepperoni

Cook the spaghetti according to package directions. Drain, transfer to a large bowl and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium heat, cook the pork, breaking it up with a spoon or spatula, until no longer pink, 5 to 6 minutes. Stir in the garlic and Italian seasoning. Add the tomatoes (with their juices), bell pepper, mushrooms and olives and cook, stirring occasionally, until the bell pepper is tender, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the soup, salt and 1 cup of cheese. Add the mixture to the bowl with the spaghetti, stirring until well combined. Transfer to a 2-quart casserole dish, cover and bake for 20 minutes.

Uncover the casserole and top with the pepperoni and 1/2 cup of cheese. Return to the oven and bake uncovered until the pepperoni is hot and the cheese is melted, about 5 minutes.

Yield: 6 servings



COMFORT FOOD PRESENT

Most recipe collections aren't complete without those traditional comfort food dishes that have been passed down through generations – sometimes staying the same, but sometimes changed to reflect a new approach, a new favorite ingredient or a new cooking method. After all, comfort has a different meaning for each one of us. In this section, you'll find cozy, hearty recipes that feature twists on classics, while still fulfilling the promise of a true comfort food with satisfying ingredients like pork and aromatic flavors that warm the heart.

Ham & Cabbage Soup



“A big bowl of steaming cabbage and ham soup hits the spot for me in the chilly winter months. I love the extra delicious flavor that ham broth creates – and the cabbage and veggies make it a little healthier. Total comfort food.”

– Ali Ebright



Ham & Cabbage Soup

- 2 cups diced or shredded ham
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 2 large carrots, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 10 cups ham or chicken broth*
- 1 2-pound head cabbage, cored and roughly diced
- 2 bay leaves
- Salt and pepper

In a large saucepan or small stockpot over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until starting to become translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the carrots, celery and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until the carrots and celery are crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Add the ham, broth, cabbage, and bay leaves and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce to a simmer, cover, and cook until the cabbage is tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Remove the bay leaves before serving.

*To make ham broth, combine 2 smoked ham hocks, 1 carrot, 1 celery stalk, 1 onion (quartered), 2 bay leaves, 1 teaspoon whole peppercorns and 4 quarts water in a large stockpot. Bring to a boil over low heat, reduce to a very gentle simmer, cover and cook until the meat falls off the ham hocks, 3 to 4 hours. Strain the broth and add salt and pepper to taste. Makes about 3 quarts.

Yield: 10 to 12 servings





Michelle Bernstein

CHEF MICHELLE
BERNSTEIN
AND MOJO RIBS



Country-Style Ribs with Mojo

2 pounds pork country-style ribs
12 cloves garlic, smashed
About 2/3 cup canola oil
3 oranges
4 limes
3 tablespoons adobo sauce, from a can of chipotles in adobo
3 tablespoons packed brown sugar
3 tablespoons olive oil
Leaves from 4 sprigs thyme
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon ground coriander

In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the garlic and enough canola oil to barely cover it. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cook until the garlic is tender and lightly golden, about 5 minutes. Strain and set the garlic aside.

Zest the oranges and set the zest aside. Juice the oranges and limes. In the jar of a blender, combine the orange juice, lime juice, garlic, adobo sauce, brown sugar, olive oil, thyme, cumin, pepper and coriander and process to purée. Stir in the zest. Transfer to a large resealable bag and add the pork. Set aside in the refrigerator overnight.

Prepare a grill to medium heat and lightly oil the grate. Remove the pork from marinade and grill, turning occasionally, until the ribs are tender. Remove the ribs from the grill and let rest 3 minutes.

Yield: 6 servings

“I grew up marinating whole pigs in mojo – so, in creating a new recipe, I decided there couldn’t be anything more perfect than marinating pork ribs in mojo. Not only does the mojo give ribs great flavor, but it naturally tenderizes the meat. After only 15 minutes on the grill, you’ll have an incredibly tasty, juicy and tender rib the whole family will devour.”



– Chef Michelle Bernstein

Country-Style Ribs with Mojo





Ham & Cheddar Green Chili Breakfast Sandwich

- 4 1/4-inch thick slices ham, cut to fit an English muffin
- 4 large eggs
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 4 whole canned mild green chilies, drained, split open and trimmed to fit an English muffin
- 4 slices Cheddar cheese
- 4 English muffins, split, toasted and lightly buttered
- 1/2 cup cooked hash browns, warm

In a large nonstick skillet over medium heat, heat the ham until browned, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate, cover to keep warm and set aside.

If necessary, wipe out the skillet. Return it to medium heat and coat with nonstick spray. One at a time, add the eggs and sprinkle with the salt and pepper. Cook until set on one side, 1 1/2 to 2 minutes. Carefully turn the eggs, then top with the chilies and cheese. Cover and cook until the eggs are set and cheese is melted, about 1 minute. Remove the pan from the heat.

Arrange the bottoms of the English muffins on plates or a platter. Top with the hash browns, ham and eggs. Add the muffin tops and serve.

Yield: 4 servings

“I’ll never forget early mornings in my house growing up – my mom made the absolute best breakfast sandwiches. This recipe is a family favorite. With four pieces of thick-cut ham and a few other ingredients, it could not be easier to prepare – and you’ll love waking up to it!”

– Jenny Flake



“Nothing says comfort to me more than baked ham. Recently, I’ve started cooking it in a slow cooker – it yields the same great flavors with less work, perfect for entertaining or a holiday meal. Your home will smell delicious – just like if the ham was roasting in the oven.”

– Katie Jasiewicz



Slow Cooker Ham with Apple Sauce

- 4 1/2-pound fully cooked bone-in butt half smoked ham*
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 sweet apple, such as Gala, peeled
- 3 tart apples, such as Granny Smith, peeled
- 1 to 1 1/2 tablespoons raisins
- 1/2 cup apple juice
- 10 whole cloves

In a small bowl, combine the brown sugar and cinnamon. Set aside.

Cut 10 thin slices from the sweet apple and set the slices aside. Core and dice the remaining sweet apple and the tart apples. In a medium bowl, combine the diced apples, raisins and 1 tablespoon of the brown sugar mixture. Set aside.

Place the apple juice in the slow cooker, then add the ham, flat side down. Sprinkle the ham with the remaining brown sugar mixture, pressing it to adhere. Scatter the diced apple mixture around the ham. Arrange the apple slices over the surface of the ham, securing each slice with a clove. Cover and cook on low for 6 to 8 hours or high for 4 to 5 hours, until the ham is heated through and the apples are tender. Transfer the ham to a cutting board and let it rest 15 to 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, strain the apple mixture in the slow cooker, reserving the solids.

Thinly slice the ham. Serve with the strained apple mixture on the side.

*Use a 6- to 7-quart slow cooker.

Yield: 10 to 12 servings



FRESH



Dr.BBQ

CHEF RAY LAMPE
AND SOUP DAY



Pork Chop Noodle Soup



“If I wasn’t a BBQ expert, I’d be cooking soups like this one all day long.”

– Chef Ray Lampe

Pork Chop Noodle Soup

3 bone-in pork chops, about 3/4-inch thick
Salt and pepper
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 cups chicken broth or pork stock
4 cups unsalted vegetable broth
1 red onion, chopped
4 carrots, chopped
2 large celery stalks, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1 cup dried rotini pasta

Season pork chops with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add chops and cook for about 4 minutes, until golden brown. Flip and cook 4 minutes more, until golden brown. Transfer chops to a plate and set aside.

Pour half of chicken broth into pot, scraping all browned bits from bottom. Add remaining chicken broth, vegetable broth, onion, carrots, celery and garlic. Mix well and bring to a simmer. Add 1 quart water, thyme, basil, 2 teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon pepper. Mix well and bring to a simmer. Add chops back to pot and return to simmer. Reduce heat and simmer for 90 minutes, stirring occasionally, being careful not to break up chops.

Transfer chops to plate, trying not to break them up. Set aside to cool. Raise the heat and bring the soup to a boil. Add pasta and cook for about 12 minutes, until tender. When the chops are cool, pull them apart, discarding all the bones and fat. Add the meat back to soup and stir well. Taste for salt and pepper, and add if needed, before serving.

Yield: 8 to 10 servings



Check out Chef Ray Lampe’s authentic Pork Chop Noodle Soup and even more delicious pork chop recipes in his new cookbook, “Pork Chop,” available in late November.

Sweet Potato & Maple Sausage Skillet



“There’s something about the smell of sweet maple sausage around a campground first thing in the morning.”

—Cassie Laemmler

bake your day

Sweet Potato & Maple Sausage Skillet

- 1 pound maple breakfast sausage
- 2 pounds sweet potatoes (2 large or 4 small), cut into 1-inch dice
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 4 teaspoons olive oil, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, plus more to taste
- 1/2 cup finely diced onion
- 1/2 cup finely diced yellow bell pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup diced mushrooms
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 cup shredded Gouda cheese

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

In a large bowl, combine the sweet potatoes, rosemary, 2 teaspoons of oil, salt and black pepper. Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet and bake until tender, 25 to 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium heat, warm 2 teaspoons of oil. Add the onion, bell pepper, garlic and a pinch of salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion and bell pepper are tender, about 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms and thyme and cook, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms begin to soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer the vegetable mixture to a large bowl, cover to keep warm and set aside.

Return the skillet to medium heat. Add the sausage and cook, breaking it up with a spoon or spatula, until no longer pink, about 4 minutes. Cook without stirring until browned on the bottom, about 2 minutes. Gently turn the sausage and cook without stirring until the other side is brown, about 2 minutes. Add the sausage to the bowl with the vegetable mixture, cover to keep warm and set aside.

Add the sweet potatoes to the bowl with the vegetable mixture, cover to keep warm and set aside.

Wipe out the skillet and use it to cook the eggs as desired, adding salt and pepper to taste.

Arrange the sausage mixture on plates, top with the cheese and eggs and serve.

Yield: 4 servings



“In our home, nothing says comfort like a tender roast stuffed with goodies and cooked to perfection. This adaptation of a classic pork loin recipe is sure to warm your heart as well as your belly.”

–Devi McDonald



Bacon-Wrapped Pork Loin with Peach & Blue Cheese Stuffing

- 1 2 1/2-pound New York (boneless loin) pork roast
- 6 slices bacon
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 tablespoons diced yellow onion
- 3 slices bread, toasted and diced
- 1/2 peach, peeled and diced
- 2 tablespoons blue cheese crumbles
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3/4 cup chicken broth
- 6 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons smoked paprika

Special equipment: Butcher's twine

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Meanwhile, in a small skillet over low heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 5 minutes. Transfer the onion to a large bowl and add the bread, peach, cheese, parsley, thyme, 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper. Slowly pour in the broth and stir until combined. Set aside.

Butterfly the pork by cutting it lengthwise to within 1/2-inch of the bottom side. Do not cut all the way through. Open it out and pound to 8x10-inch rectangle, fat side down. Spread the stuffing mixture over the pork, leaving about a 1-inch border at the edges. Roll the pork up, jelly-roll style, and arrange it seam side down. Spread the mustard all over the meat.

In a small bowl, combine the brown sugar, paprika and 1 teaspoon salt. Rub the mixture all over the roast, then wrap the bacon slices around the roast. Tie the roast with butcher's twine at each slice of bacon. Arrange the pork, seam side down, in a roasting pan and roast until the internal temperature of the pork reaches between 145 degrees F. (medium rare), with a 3-minute rest, and 160 degrees F. (medium), about 1 hour and 15 minutes, basting halfway through.

Let rest 15 minutes before slicing and serving.

Yield: 10 to 12 servings



Brown Butter Butternut & Pork Lasagna

- 1 pound ground pork
- 1 1/2 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 3/4-inch dice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 large or 2 small cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups low-fat milk
- 1 1/2 cups half and half
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 ginger cookies, such as Ginger Snaps, roughly broken
- 2 fresh sage leaves, roughly chopped
- 8 ounces no-boil lasagna noodles
- 2 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 2 cups shredded Gruyère cheese

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

In a large bowl, toss the squash and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper, transfer to a rimmed baking sheet and roast until the squash is tender, 25 to 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium heat, cook the pork, breaking it up with a spoon or spatula into large chunks, until no longer pink, 5 to 6 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer to a bowl or plate and set aside.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Cook, whisking occasionally until the butter is browned, about 1 1/2 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, whisking, until fragrant, just a few seconds. Sprinkle in the flour and cook, whisking, for 2 minutes. Slowly add the milk and half and half, whisking. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 3 minutes. Add the nutmeg and salt and pepper to taste. Set aside.

In the jar of a blender, combine the cooked squash, cookies and sage and pulse until smooth, scraping the jar as necessary (if mixture is too thick to purée, add some of the white sauce.) Set aside.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Spread about 1/4 cup of the white sauce on the bottom of an 8x8-inch pan. Top with 1/6 of the noodles, about 1/2 cup white sauce, 1/5 of the squash mixture, 1/5 of the pork and 1/4 cup of each of the cheeses. Add four more layers of noodles, white sauce, squash mixture, pork and cheeses. Top with the remaining noodles, white sauce and cheeses and bake uncovered until browned and heated through, 35 to 40 minutes.

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

“I grew up in Washington, and find myself missing it. This lasagna has the aroma of those crisp fall nights, the flavor of juicy pork and nutty squash, and the comfort of all that cheese. It's a mash-up of my life growing up there with a huge garden full of butternut squash.”

–Carrian Cheney



WARM

**JENNY MAKES
MOM'S BRUNCH EGGS**



“This recipe for brunch eggs is special because it’s my mom’s – it reminds me of my childhood. Today, it’s one of my family’s favorites. You make it the night before with bread, eggs, cheese and ham, and then pop it in the oven in the morning for a very delicious breakfast.”
– Jenny Ingram



Mom’s Brunch Eggs

- 2 cups diced ham or cooked, crumbled bacon or sausage
- 8 large eggs
- 2 cups milk
- Salt and pepper
- 8 tablespoons butter, softened
- 8 slices sourdough bread, or up to 12 depending on the size of the slices
- 5 cups shredded Jack and Cheddar cheese blend
- About 1 teaspoon ground paprika

In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs and milk. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.

Butter one side of each slice of bread. Arrange half of the slices, buttered side down, in a single layer in a 9x13-inch baking pan. Top with half of the cheese, half of the ham and half of the egg mixture. Add a second layer of bread, cheese, ham and egg mixture. Sprinkle the paprika on top, cover and set aside in the refrigerator overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Bake the casserole uncovered until the eggs are set, about 45 minutes.

Yield: 12 servings



Biscuits & Gravy

1 pound ground pork

For the biscuits:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more as needed
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 8 tablespoons cold butter, cut into small pieces
- 1 1/4 cups whole milk

For the gravy:

- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon McCormick’s Grill Mates Smokehouse Maple seasoning (optional)
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, or more to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, or more to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon dried sage
- 1/4 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/8 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Pinch ground cayenne pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely diced
- 5 tablespoons all-purpose flour, plus more as needed
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1/4 cup pure maple syrup, or more to taste

Special equipment: Parchment paper or silicone baking mat

“I thought my husband would want Mexican food on Cinco de Mayo – but he always asks for my biscuits and gravy!”

– Lauren Brennan



To make the biscuits, preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat and set aside.

In the bowl of a food processor, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and baking soda, pulsing a few times to mix. Add the butter and pulse until it’s the size of small peas. Pour in the milk, pulsing, until incorporated. Pulse 5 more times, then transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface.

Knead the dough 4 or 5 times, sprinkling with flour as needed. Roll the dough out to 1-inch thick, then use a 2 1/2-inch biscuit cutter to make 8 biscuits, re-kneading and re-rolling the scraps as necessary. Arrange the biscuits on the prepared baking sheet and bake until lightly browned, 12 to 14 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the gravy: In a large bowl, combine the pork, brown sugar, maple seasoning (if using), salt, black pepper, sage, rosemary, thyme, marjoram, nutmeg and cayenne, stirring to thoroughly combine. Set aside.

In a large skillet over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Add the pork mixture and cook, breaking it up with a spoon or spatula, until no longer pink, 5 to 6 minutes. Sprinkle in the flour and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Stir in the milk, increase the heat to high, and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook, stirring to smooth any lumps, until thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Add more flour as needed to achieve desired consistency. Remove from the heat and stir in the maple syrup. Add more maple syrup, salt and black pepper to taste.

Split the biscuits and arrange on plates. Spoon the gravy on top and serve.

Yield: 8 servings



“I fell in love with these cheesy, shredded pork-filled enchiladas in college – but I’ve never been able to roll the tortillas. One night, I got flustered and ended up throwing “Lazy Enchiladas” together by tearing the tortillas and layering them. I had no idea this simple casserole would become a family favorite.”

– Danica Pike



Lazy Pork Enchiladas with Red Sauce

- 1 2-pound sirloin pork roast
- 1 16-ounce jar salsa
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 1 4-ounce can diced fire-roasted green chilies
- 2 tablespoons taco seasoning mix
- 1 28-ounce can mild enchilada sauce
- 15 extra-thin yellow corn tortillas, quartered
- 8 ounces finely shredded reduced-fat sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1 3.8-ounce can sliced black olives, drained

In a medium bowl, combine the salsa, onion, bell pepper and chilies (with their juices). Set aside.

Spray a slow cooker with nonstick spray. Rub the taco seasoning all over the pork and place the pork in the slow cooker. Pour the salsa mixture on top, cover and cook on low for 8 to 10 hours or high for 4 to 6 hours, until the meat is very tender.

Remove the pork and use two forks to shred the meat. Set aside.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Spray a 9x13-inch pan with nonstick spray and spread 1/2 cup of the enchilada sauce in the bottom. Top with 1/3 of the tortillas, 1/2 of the pork, 1/3 of the cheese, 1/3 of the olives and 1/2 cup of enchilada sauce. Add one more layer of tortillas, pork, cheese, olives, and enchilada sauce. Add a final layer of tortillas, the rest of the sauce, cheese and olives. Bake uncovered until browned and heated through, 30 to 35 minutes.

Yield: 8 servings



Ham & Spinach Galette

- 1 1/2 cups diced ham
- 1 1/3 cups flour, divided, plus more as needed
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 1 large egg, plus 1 large egg white, divided
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1/2 cup shredded white Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup loosely packed fresh spinach

Special equipment: Parchment paper or silicone baking mat

In a medium bowl, combine the 1 cup of flour, chili powder and salt. Use a pastry cutter to add the butter, working it until the butter is in large pea-sized pieces. In a small bowl, whisk the egg and water. Add the egg mixture to the flour mixture, and use your hands to start kneading them together. Add the remaining 1/3 cup of flour, a little at a time, transferring the mixture to a lightly floured work surface if you like, kneading until you have a smooth, supple dough (you might not need all the flour). Shape the dough into a 3/4-inch thick disk, cover with plastic wrap and set aside in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour. (Alternately, you can use an electric mixer or food processor to make the dough.)

Meanwhile, in a medium skillet over medium-low heat, warm the oil. Add the ham and tomatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes become thick and sauce-like, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat and set aside.

On a lightly floured work surface, roll the dough out to a 10-inch circle. Transfer the dough to the prepared baking sheet and top with the ham mixture, leaving a 1- to 1 1/2-inch border around the edges. Top with the cheese and spinach. Fold the dough over the edge of the fillings, pinching it firmly together every inch or two. Brush the edge of the dough with the egg white (you won't need it all) and bake until crust is golden, 30 to 35 minutes.

Cool 5 to 10 minutes before slicing and serving.

Yield: 2 to 3 servings

“I remember making homemade pizza dough at home with my mom when growing up. Now I have a little baby, and I’m ready to pass my love for baking on to her.

This galette recipe is perfect for a family meal – and you can get the whole family involved.”

– Meagan Wied



FROM MY KITCHEN



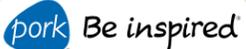
PORK BE INSPIRED® FAVORITES

A selection of our most comforting favorites perfect for any place, occasion or craving that calls for a heart-warming, pork-filled meal. Inspired and craving more? Visit us at PorkBeInspired.com.

Puerto Rican Shredded Pork

SAVORY

“After it’s been simmering all day in a slow cooker, you’ll savor every piece of this zesty, healthful shredded pork dish – and you’ll remember the soothing aromas for years to come.”

 **pork** Be inspired

Puerto Rican Shredded Pork

2-3 pounds boneless sirloin pork roast, or sirloin tip roast, trimmed and tied with kitchen twine if necessary*
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
4-5 cloves garlic, skins removed, crushed
1 tablespoon cumin
1/2 tablespoon coarse salt
1 teaspoon oregano
4 oranges, juiced or 1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
4 limes, juiced

Using a sharp knife, poke a few holes into the pork and stuff holes with half of the crushed garlic.

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, warm the oil. Add the pork and brown on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer the meat to a slow cooker.

Combine the remaining ingredients in a blender and blend for a few seconds until evenly combined. Place the pork in the slow cooker. Pour the liquid mixture over the pork, and let the pork marinate in the mixture for about 10 minutes on each side.

Turn the slow cooker on low, and set the timer for 8 hours.

After 8 hours, remove pork and shred using two forks on a large cutting board. Remove all the liquid from the slow cooker except for 1 cup of the cooking liquid and add pork back to pot. Let it cook another 15 to 30 minutes.

Serve the shredded pork over lettuce wraps or in corn tortillas, and top with pico de gallo, chopped cilantro and/or avocado.

*Please note that if you’re unfamiliar with tying a roast with kitchen twine, ask your butcher to pre-tie the roast in the store.

Yield: 4 to 6 servings, plus leftovers



Bacon-Wrapped Pork Meatloaf



SHAREABLE

pork Be inspired

Bacon-Wrapped Pork Meatloaf

- 2 pounds ground pork*
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup skim milk
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
(grainy or non-grainy, depending on preference)
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup Italian parsley, chopped (or 2 tablespoons dried parsley)
- 8 strips bacon (apple-smoked bacon preferred)

Heat the oven to 400 degrees F. Line a baking pan with a few layers of aluminum foil and set aside.

In a large bowl, add the eggs, milk, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper. Whisk until everything is evenly combined. Add the ground pork, breadcrumbs and parsley. Mix until combined.

Transfer the meat to the prepared baking sheet and form it into a 9x5-inch loaf. Arrange the bacon across the top of the meatloaf and bake for about 55 to 65 minutes until the internal temperature of the meatloaf reaches 160 degrees F., on an instant-read thermometer.

Remove from the oven to a cutting board and let cool for 10 to 15 minutes before slicing and serving.

*Please note that coarse ground pork is recommended for a better texture.

Yield: 8 servings

“An unexpected, savory layer of bacon surrounding a perfectly seasoned pork meat loaf makes this a recipe worthy enough to hand down to family and friends.”

BBQ Pork Mac n' Cheese



SOOTHING

pork Be inspired

BBQ Pork Mac n' Cheese

2-3 pounds pork shoulder, cut into 3 pieces*
1 18-ounce bottle BBQ sauce (any variety or preference)
12 ounces macaroni, or another small pasta
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 red onion, finely chopped
3/4 cup half and half
1 1/2 cups shredded Fontina cheese (or white Cheddar)
Kosher salt and pepper

Place the pieces of pork shoulder and BBQ sauce into the slow cooker. Cover and place on low heat for 8 hours.

After 8 hours, using two forks, shred the pork while it's still in the slow cooker. Once shredded, let it rest in the slow cooker with the remaining BBQ sauce.

Bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook according to package directions. Reserve 1/2 cup of the pasta cooking water and drain the pasta.

Return the pot to the stove over low heat and add the olive oil. Once the oil is warm, add the onion, season with salt and cook until golden brown, about 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in the half and half. When the mixture just begins to simmer, add the cheese and whisk until smooth.

Once the cheese has melted, add the pasta and stir to coat. If the macaroni and cheese seems thick, add a few tablespoons of the reserved pasta water and stir to combine. Taste and season with additional salt as needed.

Evenly distribute the pasta to 6 serving bowls and add a serving of the shredded BBQ pulled pork on top of the pasta and serve. Reserve the additional pulled pork for leftovers.

Yield: 6 servings, plus extra pulled pork as leftovers

“A tangy and tender twist on the rich, creamy mac n' cheese from your youth, this recipe is a cozy little escape from the everyday.”



Layered Ham & Cheese Quesadillas

FEEL-GOOD

“These quesadillas combine all the great things about comfort food in one wholesome bite – a little bit of crispiness, melted cheese and that distinctive, inviting taste from oven-roasted ham.”

pork Be inspired

Layered Ham & Cheese Quesadillas

1 pound sliced ham steak
Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper
12 8-inch flour tortillas
1 15-ounce can refried black beans (or refried pinto beans), warmed
1/4 cup canned roasted green chilies
2 cups store-bought salsa (any variety you prefer)
1 cup shredded Monterey jack cheese

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Season the ham steak with salt and freshly ground pepper.

Place the seasoned ham steak on a parchment lined baking sheet and transfer to the preheated oven and cook for about 15 to 20 minutes until the internal temperature is 140 degrees F. Halfway through the cooking time, flip the roast over, and continue to cook until the roast is done.

Allow the ham steak to rest loosely covered with foil, for at least 10 minutes before cutting. Cut the ham into small 1/2-inch cubes and set aside.

Preheat broiler. Put tortillas in single layer on baking sheet. Brush with oil. Broil until toasted, about 3 minutes. Turn; and set aside.

Spread a thin layer of the warmed beans on one of the tortillas. Top with a few tablespoons of shredded cheese and a sprinkle of cubed ham steak and some of the green chilies. Repeat process one more time and then top with another tortilla so there are 3 tortillas per stack, with the top tortilla plain. Repeat this process with the remaining tortillas and ingredients.

Once you have 4 stacks of quesadillas, drizzle salsa over each of the stacks and sprinkle with a bit of cheese. Place the quesadillas back into the oven for a few minutes to melt the cheese. Then, cut into 4 wedges. Garnish as desired.

Yield: 8 servings

Smoky Pork, Bacon & White Bean Chili



MMMM...

“Every spoonful of this smoky, bacon-infused version of classic chili is packed with perfectly cooked pork, fire-roasted tomatoes, a little bit of spice and a lot of warmth.”

pork Be inspired

Smoky Pork, Bacon & White Bean Chili

- 1 1/2 pounds pork loin roast, cut into 3/4-inch dice*
- 8 ounces bacon, thick-cut (5 or 6 slices), cut crosswise into 1/4-inch strips
- 1 large onion, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 2 14 1/2-ounce cans diced fire-roasted tomatoes
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 2 15-ounce cans cannellini beans (white kidney) or other white beans, drained
- Salt
- 1/2 cup sour cream (optional)
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced (optional)

In a large saucepan or small stockpot over medium heat, cook the bacon, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 8 to 10 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate and set aside.

Add the onion to the bacon fat and cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes. Increase the heat to medium-high, add the pork, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are crisp-tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in the chili powder and paprika. Stir in the tomatoes (with their juices) and water. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until the pork is tender, 35 to 45 minutes.

Stir in the beans and about 2/3 of the bacon and cook, stirring occasionally, until heated through, about 10 minutes. Add salt to taste. Serve the chili garnished with the remaining bacon and the sour cream and scallions, if using.

Yield: 6 servings

*You can also make this recipe with pork shoulder.

Balsamic Rosemary Pork Loin with Roasted Potatoes



HEARTY

pork Be inspired

Balsamic Rosemary Pork Loin with Roasted Potatoes

2 1/2-pound New York (top loin) pork roast, boneless
1 1/2 cups fresh rosemary
12 cloves garlic
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons black pepper
2 1/2 pounds small red potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch wedges

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.

In a food processor, combine rosemary leaves, garlic, oil, vinegar, salt and pepper and pulse to make a coarse, wet paste, scraping down the bowl as necessary. Spread 3/4 of paste on all sides of roast. Place roast, fat side up, in shallow roasting pan large enough to hold roast with 3 inches room around all sides. Roast 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine potatoes and remaining paste.

Reduce oven to 350 degrees F. Add potato mixture to pan, arranging potatoes around roast. Continue roasting 40 to 45 minutes, tossing potatoes halfway through, or until the internal temperature of the pork reaches between 145 degrees F. (medium rare), with a 3-minute rest, and 160 degrees F. (medium) and potatoes are tender.

(If roast is done before potatoes, transfer it to a cutting board and return roasting pan with potatoes to oven.)

Remove roast from oven and let rest 10 minutes. Slice roast and arrange on platter. Surround with potatoes and serve.

Yield: 8 to 10 servings

“Sometimes, comfort is as simple as a plate full of just-sliced, perfectly roasted pork with a glaze made from fresh rosemary, garlic and balsamic vinegar, served with a side of seasoned potatoes.”

How to Cook Pork PERFECTLY

No matter what comfort dish you choose to enjoy with pork, for flavorful, tender and juicy pork the National Pork Board recommends cooking pork chops, roasts and tenderloins to an internal temperature between 145 degrees F. (medium rare), followed by a 3-minute rest, and 160 degrees F. (medium). To check doneness, use a digital cooking thermometer.

Ground pork, like all ground meat, should be cooked to 160 degrees F. Pre-cooked ham can be reheated to 140 degrees F. or enjoyed cold.



Cut	Thickness/Weight	Internal Temp. Followed by 3-minute rest	Average Cooking Time
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Roasting

Roast at 350 degrees F., unless otherwise noted. Roast in a shallow pan, uncovered.

Loin Roast, bone-in and boneless*	2 - 5 lbs.	145° F.	20 minutes/lb.
Crown Roast*	10 lbs.	145° F.	12 minutes/lb.
Fresh Leg/Uncured Ham*	18-20 lbs.	145° F.	15 minutes/lb.
Tenderloin (roast at 425° F.)	1/2 - 1 1/2 lbs.	145° F.	20-27 minutes total time
Ribs	—	Tender	1 1/2 - 2 hours
Ham, fully cooked	5-6 lbs.	140° F.	20 minutes/lb.



Broiling

4-5 inches from heat

OR

Grilling

Over direct, medium heat; turn once halfway through grilling.

Loin Chops, bone-in or boneless (3/4-in. thick)	3/4 in.	145° F.	8-9 minutes total time
Thick Loin Chops, boneless (1 1/2-in. thick)	1 1/2 in.	145° F.	12-16 minutes total time
Loin Kabobs	1 in. cubes	Tender	10-15 minutes total time
Tenderloin	1/2-1 1/2 lbs.	145° F.	20 minutes total time
Ground Pork Patties	1/2 in.	160° F.	8-10 minutes total time



Sautéing

Add a little cooking oil to pan; sauté over medium-high heat and turn once halfway through cooking time.

Cutlets	1/4 in.	145° F.	20 minutes/lb.
Loin Chops, bone-in or boneless	3/4 in.	145° F.	12 minutes/lb.
Tenderloin Medallions	1/4 - 1/2 in.	145° F.	15 minutes/lb.
Ground Pork Patties	1/2 in.	140° F.	20 minutes/lb.



Barbecuing

Over indirect medium heat (285 degrees F.).

Loin Roast, bone-in or boneless*	2-5 lbs.	145° F.	2 lb.=20 minutes/lb. 3 1/2-5 lb.=15 minutes/lb.
Shoulder*	3-6 lbs.	Tender	45 minutes/lb.
Ribs	—	Tender	1 1/2 - 2 minutes/lb.



Braising

Cook, covered, with a liquid at a simmer; turn once halfway through cooking time.

Loin Chops, bone-in or boneless	1/2 - 3/4 in.	145° F.	2 lb.=20 minutes/lb. 3 1/2-5 lb.=15 minutes/lb.
Loin Cubes	1 in.	Tender	8 - 10 minutes
Tenderloin Medallions	1/2 - 3/4 in.	Tender	8 - 10 minutes
Shoulder*	3 - 6 lbs.	Tender	2 - 2 1/2 hours
Ribs	—	Tender	1 1/2 - 2 hours



Stewing

Cook, covered, with liquid at a slow simmer.

Loin or Shoulder Cubes	1 in.	Tender	45 minutes - 1 hour
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*Note: For easier slicing and to let the pork juices redistribute throughout the meat, remove larger cuts such as roasts from the oven or grill and let them stand for a total of 10 minutes before serving.

Pork's Slim 7 The Leanest Cuts of Pork

Seven common cuts of pork are, on average, 16% leaner than 20 years ago.

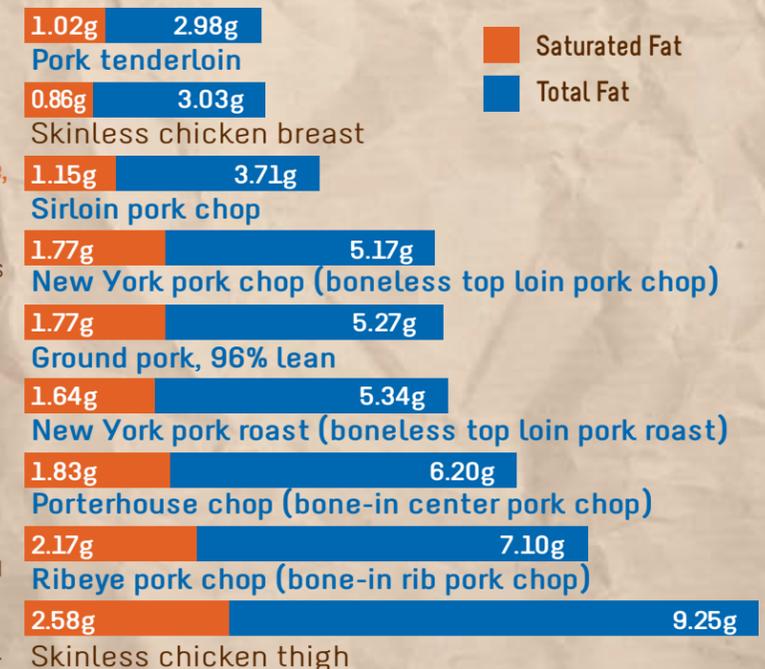
The pork industry has responded to the consumer's desire for lean pork products. Through efforts in feeding and management practices by pork producers, seven of the most common cuts of pork have, on average, 16% less fat and 27% less saturated fat than 20 years ago.

Based on 3-ounce cooked servings (roasted or broiled), visible fat and skin trimmed after cooking.

Reference: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Research Service, 2012.

Lean: Less than 10 grams total fat, 4.5 grams saturated fat and 95 milligrams cholesterol per serving.

Extra Lean: Less than 5 grams total fat, 2 grams saturated fat and 95 milligrams cholesterol per serving.



Purchasing Pork: Identifying Fresh Pork Cuts

CHOPS



New York Pork Chop



Porterhouse Pork Chop



Ribeye Pork Chop



Ribeye Pork Chop, boneless



Sirloin Pork Chop, boneless

ROASTS



New York Pork Roast



Pork Ribeye Roast



Sirloin Pork Roast



Pork Tenderloin



Arm Pork Roast



Blade Pork Roast

RIBS



Pork Back Ribs



Pork Spareribs



Pork St. Louis-Style Ribs



Pork Country-Style Ribs, bone-in



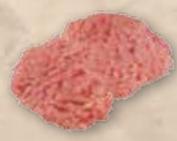
Pork Country-Style Ribs, boneless

Cut Loose!

When shopping for pork, consider these convenient options:



CUBES: Great for kabobs, stew and chili



GROUND: Quick patties and bulk for casseroles



CUTLETS: Delicious breakfast chops and quick sandwiches

CLASSIC FEEL-GOOD
 WARM FAVORITE GO-TO
 MEMORABLE SHAREABLE
 SAVORY FRESH
 SATISFYING FROM MY KITCHEN
 FAVORITE TRADITION
 NOSTALGIC SOOTHING TWIST



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