

— ESTABLISHED 1978 —
TONY'S
· MEATS & MARKET ·

SMOKED PORK SHOULDER

Guide



Ingredients

6 Lbs Pork Shoulder, trimmed & netted

Water or Yellow Mustard, to coat

1 cup Tony's BBQ Sauce (we recommend our Sweet & Sassy BBQ Sauce)

1/3 cup Tony's Champion Rub

10 Brioche Burger Buns

4 oz. of Applewood Chips

SMOKED PORK SHOULDER

Method

- 1** Moisten the surface of the pork shoulder with either water or yellow mustard to make the seasoning stick. Season the pork Shoulder all over with Tony's Champion Smoke rub 12 - 24 hours before cooking. This process is called dry brining and it gives the rub a chance to penetrate.
- 2** Prepare your smoker for cooking and adjust the vents to bring the temperature to approximately 225°F. Allow your smoker to level off and make sure that the temperature does not rise above 225°F for 20 minutes. Add about 4 ounces of wood chips, pellets, or chunks to the fire.
- 3** **COOK.** Once the smoker or grill has come to temperature and has not fluctuated for 20 minutes, place your dry brined pork shoulder into your smoker directly from the fridge. If you are using a leave-in thermometer, insert the probe into the pork shoulder, making sure the tip of the probe is right in the center of the pork shoulder (away any bones if you have a bone-in roast).
- 4** Allow the pork to smoke uninterrupted, checking every hour or so to make sure the fuel is sufficient and that you are holding temperature between 225°F to 250°F. Don't worry if the temperature temporarily goes up to 300°F as pork shoulders are very forgiving, but do try to keep it under 250°F. Add additional doses of wood sparingly during the first two hours, about 4 ounces every 30 minutes. The key is to add a pleasant smoky flavor to the meat without overpowering it.
- 5** **THE STALL.** If you are cooking at 225°F to 250°F, when the meat hits about 150°F internal temp, it will probably "stall." The internal temperature may not go up for hours because the moisture evaporating from the surface is cooling the meat at the same rate as the hot air is warming it and the internal temperature plateaus. You can just wait out the stall, or you can speed through it by increasing the heat to about 300°F or by wrapping the meat tightly in foil. This is called the Texas Crutch.
- 6** **CONTINUE COOKING.** When the pork shoulder hits an internal temperature of about 170°F, collagens, which are part of the connective tissues, begin to melt and turn to gelatin. The meat gets much more tender and juicier when this happens. Allow the pork shoulder to continue cooking past 170°F.
- 7** **FINISHING.** When the internal temperature hits 200°F (around 8 to 12 hours total cooking time) it's time to check if the pork shoulder is done. The exterior should be dark brown. Some rubs and cookers will make the meat look black like a meteorite, but fear not: it's delicious and not burnt! If there is a bone, use a glove or paper towel to protect your fingers and wiggle the bone. If the bone turns easily and comes out of the meat, you are done. If there is no bone, use the "stick a fork in it method." Insert a fork and try to rotate it 90 degrees. If it turns with very little pressure, you're done. There can be variations the meat is done when it is done. It is really good advice to start smoking about 10 to 12 hours before dinner time.
- 8** If the pork shoulder is not done, close the lid and allow it to continue cooking until it reaches an internal temperature of 203°F. At this temp, the meat seems to soften significantly. If it is still not soft, you've just got a tough shoulder!
- 9** **HOLDING THE MEAT** (optional). Use a dish with a lid or cooler that can hold the meat. Leave the probe in the meat, wrap tightly in foil, wrap the foil in towels, and put it the whole thing in the cooler. Plug the cord into the readout and make sure the internal temperature of the meat never drops below 145°F. Serve it before it does. Just know that this wrapping technique will soften the bark and change the texture of the meat slightly.
- 10** **PULL IT.** About 30 minutes before sitting down for dinner, put the meat into a large pan to catch drippings. If your shoulder came bone-in, the blade should slide right out, and have virtually no meat attached if it was cooked properly. Pull the pork apart with gloved hands or forks. Discard big chunks of fat.
- 11** **SERVE.** Serve the pulled pork, on brioche buns with one of Tony's BBQ sauces, coleslaw, and our signature baked beans from the Chef's Case.

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