

Smoke a Fresh Pork Butt

Prep time 1 hour

Cook time 16 hours



This cut is a 9.1 lb. "Bone In" whole pork butt. The bone was fairly small and did not add much to the weight.

Salem Prime Cuts is my local butcher. It was so fresh I thought it was beef.



Thoroughly rinse the meat. Make sure to clean it well. No matter where you purchase your meat, it can harbor bacteria. At the low cooking temperatures we use, I think this is a wise step.



This cut of meat is always quite fatty. Trim off 80% - 90% of the exterior layer. There's enough internal fat to keep it moist. Even after trimming, I would estimate 10% - 15% of the weight is fat.



Here's a basic rub recipe that I like for pork.

- 1 tbsp dry chopped onion
- 1 tbsp dry powdered garlic
- 2 tbsp season salt
- 2 tbsp paprika
- 2 tbsp special chilli powder from Karl Winkler (thanks Karl)
- 1 tbsp Kosher salt
- 3 tbsp Light brown sugar
- 1 tsp black pepper

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Before applying the rub, thoroughly coat the meat with either yellow or spicy mustard. I don't feel it adds to the flavor, but it helps the rub stick.



It's now 9:30 PM and in the fridge it goes until 3:00 AM.

Next time I don't think I want to do this step. I think this added several hours to the cooking time, as it took forever to get up to the final temperature.



Hickory chips impart a nice mellow flavor, almost too mellow. So I added a few chunks of Red Oak. White Oak it too high in Tannic acid so I don't recommend it.



Soak That Wood! At the very least use water. If you can, add some things to spice it up.

I used:

- 1 Pint Fresh Apple Cider**
- 1 cup water**
- 1/2 Cup Rice Wine Vinegar.**

If it all floats, weight it down so it's covered

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I just woke up. A 1/2 hour late, but that's not so bad. That's 3:35 A.M. , not PM



Get those coals fired up. I really prefer natural lump coal instead of the Kingsford type.

After 16 hours of smoking and 6 batches of hot coals, there will be hardly any ash. I even suppose what ash is left was from the wood chips.



I use a chimney style lighter. One or two wads of news paper underneath will do.

Okay, that's for girls. Break out the torch and get that sucker going fast!



10 Minutes later and it's well lit. I start with 2 batches of coal for the initial heat up. Make sure they are thoroughly glowing.

It's okay to add coals later that are not lit fully, but not now.

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Instead of plain water for the water bowl I like to add things depending on what meat I'm using. For pork, I like to add sweet things

1 Can Dr. Pepper or any cola

1 pint apple cider

The rest I filled with water



Set the trap and figure out what's living under the deck. Oh, wait a minute, this is another story.

It ended up a Possum and no, I did not smoke him.



This smoker has a water dish that holds about 2 quarts of liquid. It not only keeps the fat from dripping on the coals, it keeps the heated air moist. Most importantly it helps maintain a uniform cooking temperature. Water doesn't get hotter the 212 degrees



It's Now 4 AM and the meat came right out of the fridge and onto the grate. Again, I think I will let it rest at room temp in a sealed container for a few hours to warm up to just below room temperature.

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I use a remote thermometer, but I don't measure the meat temp just yet. I have the probe hanging in the air inside the smoker. That way I know what's really going on. I try to keep the temp between 200 and 230. With that big a spread it's easy.



Okay... It's now Noon. It's been smoking with plenty of wood chips and chunks for 8 hours. Internal temp is 140 degrees. I gave the whole thing a quick rinse with water to knock off any ash that may have clung to it during the smoking.



Time to wrap it. I used two layers of heavy duty foil. Keep it loose and a little open on top. The goal is to keep the juices next to the meat, but not seal it off from the smoke. You can't tell in the photo, but the foil is not sealed



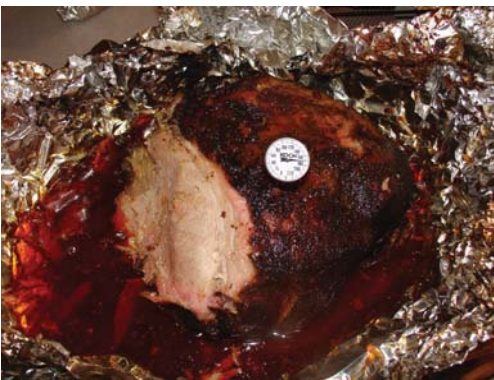
What more can I say. Let's wait some more.

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See the time? 8:30 PM. It's been going for 16 hours and it looks great.



Internal temp is 170 degrees, but let it rest and the temp will go up 5-7 degrees. Could it have smoked a bit longer? I think so and that's why I will let the meat get to room temp prior to smoking next time. I really wanted it to be 180-190 when I took it out.

Final result was the best Pork Butt I have ever smoked. I don't often say that about my cooking as I am very critical. The moral of the story is, this process can't be rushed. Time and temperature must be right.

Should anyone find this info helpful, drop me a note. If you have any tips for me, by all means let me know. Happy Smoking!

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