

Park Loop Pulled Pork



Ingredients

5 pounds	(80 oz)	pork butt (bone-in)
4 cups	(32 oz)	Park Loop Porter
2 cups	(16 oz)	chicken stock
2 large		onions wedged
		salt & pepper to taste
		EV00 (extra virgin olive oil) for browning

Pulled pork. It's one of those dishes that is made differently in every region of the country and even called many different things in different cuisines. In fact next week, for Cinco de Mayo, we'll use it in a breakfast dish and call it *carnitas*.

Note: A word about the pork. Pork Butt or Boston Butt is not from the rump of the pig as the name would imply. It's actually the front shoulder. It's easiest to shop for at larger stores with giant butcher departments because it can be large (6-10#), but you can ask for it anywhere. There are two halves to the butt, one bone-in and one boneless. Big stores may sell both together and this is often a terrific bargain. If so, you'll want to cut the butt in half, creating the bone-in and boneless portions yourself. While both could be used in this dish, we have better options for the boneless part that we'll get to in another post.

Because the pork is actually braised (cooked in liquid), it can be prepared in the oven in a large dutch-oven pan, in a slow cooker on the counter top or as I do, in a pressure cooker. The only difference will be the time it takes.

But before we get to the cooking vessel, we need to *brown* the meat. Use the salt and pepper to liberally season the butt. Pat it on to help it stick. Heat a tablespoon or two of olive oil in a large skillet or sauté pan. When it's hot, brown the butt on all sides. This thing is big and weighs in at a couple of pounds, so you'll probably need two large forks or tongs to turn it. When it's nicely browned on all sides, move it to your braising pot.

Add the onion wedges, the beer and the stock. *BTW, any meat stock or even vegetable stock will do; I just happened to have a lot of chicken stock in my freezer because I make my own from leftover chicken carcasses. But keep in mind when you choose the stock, that when the pork is done braising, you'll have 2 quarts of wonderful Park Loop Porter infused stock left over as a bonus!*

Cover the pot and cook about 8 hours for the slow cooker. Yes this is a great dish to let cook while you are away for the day using that slow cooker. In the oven (covered) about 3-4 hours at 350 degrees; but you'll have to keep tabs on the oven version because lots of the liquid will evaporate during the cooking and you may even need to replenish it.

I have a short cut. It's my one kitchen gadget (indulgence) in many years. It's called an [Instant Pot](#). It's a counter-top, digitally programmable, pressure cooker. It will cook this pork butt to *pulling* tenderness in just 2 hours, preserve all the stock and do it unattended!

When the pork is finally finished, let it cool right in the pan with the stock. When it reaches a temperature where you can handle it, and I mean with your hands, because you are going to do the *pulling* part with your fingers, remove the pork to a plate. If its properly *done*, it will start to fall off the bone even as you lift it.

I use the plate and two bowls, one for the pulled pork and one for the left over fat and scraps. Begin by pulling off big chunks, separating it at the soft lines of fat. Then you can easily *pull* or shred the meat into the bowl. My yield was about 2 1/2 pounds of pulled pork plus 2 1/2 quarts of stock. Refrigerated the meat should be good for several days or you can freeze it. As always I freeze the fat and scraps for the stock pot, which I do regularly in my [Instant Pot](#).

A pulled pork sandwich on [Bucket Multigrain Beer Bread](#) with a tall Bucket Rhodes Scholar is the first thing I think of. Is that too obvious? Mrs. Kitchen drudge and I will often use it on pizza, in quesadillas and tostadas and for Cinco de Mayo next week, a weekend breakfast special.

Acknowledgement: As in this post, I will often expound on the cuts of meat and poultry I use in my recipes. I am not a butcher nor do I possess any special knowledge of the art, though it is a secret passion. However I do have a special source for all my butchery advice. It's an out of print book called [Cutting Up in the Kitchen](#) by Merle Ellis.