

Smoked Pork Belly Burnt Ends



SMOKED PORK BELLY BURNT ENDS

The Cut



Despite my wife's previous naysaying on pork belly, I absolutely love it. Call it trendy, but it has the perfect balance of fat and meat making for the ideal option when making something like pork burnt ends. This cut will come in many sizes, from small strips to a full slab (10+ lbs). Make sure when you buy it, you ask the butcher for the skin to be trimmed off (saves some weight when you have to pay by the pound!). And be sure you get enough to feed a crowd, because they will be coming back for seconds, and thirds. I like to get at least 3 lbs as it gives me enough to get good size bites. When we cater we think 5 ounces of meat per person for a serving, so you roughly get three servings per pound. What we have here in this picture is 5 lbs.

The Prep



If you still see skin on the belly, or there is a little extra fat, trim that off. Then cut the meat into 1 1/2 to 2 inch cubes. You will get some shrinkage from the cooking process, so don't be afraid if at first the cubes seem a bit large. After cooking they will shrink down to the perfect sized bite.

Next apply EVOO (enough to coat the meat) and your favorite dry rub on the cubes (we use [this dry rub](#)). Be generous (we use about 1 cup of dry rub for 5 lbs of meat. Feel free to adjust the amount based off your portion size). Because there is so much fat in the belly, I don't bother with a brine in advance.



The Cook

Really we want to smoke first for that flavor and bark, and then we want to braise it in some sauce to get even more flavor and moisture into the meat. To accomplish this, we will cook on a rack of some kind, as it is easier to lift off larger numbers of those cubes. If you don't have a rack that's fine, it just makes it easier to transport.



Smoke for three hours at 225-250 degrees or until you like the color of the meat. A nice bark will form starting around the three hour mark. This can take longer based on so many factors like wind and how much bark you like. The key is, once you put into the braising liquid, your bark is done forming.



Next, add the cubes to a pan (we like a heat-proof disposable pan). Into the pan add the braising liquid. We use BBQ sauce to really add that extra flavor (about 1 cup), 3-4 tablespoons of butter, which adds richness and acts as a fatty binding agent for bringing the sauce and honey together, and then 2 tablespoons of honey (or agave) to bring a stickiness and sweet characteristic. Then mix them all together.



Then cover and braise in smoker for another 60 – 90 minutes. You will find that the liquid braises at or near a boil and that the fat renders down in the burnt ends keeping the pan moist. Again, you have added additional fat in the butter, the honey as a binder and the sauce for flavor to really render out the fat that is in the pork belly.



Finally, remove the foil pan cover and cook for another 15 minutes to let the heat tack up that sauce, as you would with ribs or other sauced meats. Remove and eat. It's that simple. And that delicious!



I should warn you that these aren't really recommended by your doctor. So I suggest starting your day with a green smoothie, then indulge in these for lunch. It's called a balanced diet

Smoked Pork Belly Burnt Ends

Prep time

15 mins

Cook time

5 hours

Total time

5 hours 15 mins



A pork version of burnt ends. Inspired by the magical and delish beef burnt end, this pork version is super tender, full of flavor and so easy to make.

Author: Vindulge

Recipe type: dinner, bbq, easy

Cuisine: bbq, barbecue, pork,

Serves: 8-10 servings

Ingredients

For the Pork Belly Burnt Ends:

- 5 lbs pork belly, sliced into cubes
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil (EVOO)
- 1 cup dry rub (see notes for our favorite)

For the Sauce:

- 1 cup favorite BBQ sauce (we used Pinot Noir BBQ Sauce, see notes)
- 3 tbsps unsalted butter
- 2 tbsps honey

Instructions

1. Preheat smoker to 225 – 250 degrees using fruit wood (we used cherry for color and sweeter flavor)
2. Trim excess skin and fat off the pork belly and slice into 2 inch cubes and place into a large bowl.
3. Add EVOO and dry rub liberally and then place cubes onto a wire rack or directly on the smoker.
4. Smoke uncovered for three hours. Look for a darker red color and a modest bark develop.
5. Remove the pork belly cubes from the smoker and place into a foil pan and then add your BBQ sauce, butter, and honey, and stir. Next cover the pan with aluminum foil and place back on the smoker.
6. Cook for an additional 90 minutes or until the internal temperature (IT) is roughly 200 – 203 degrees Fahrenheit.
7. Remove the foil, close the lid to the smoker, and smoke for another 15 minutes to let the sauce thicken up.
8. Remove from smoker and serve.