Smoked Pulled Pork

Make-ahead · Serves a crowd · Serves 10–12

Ken's note: TBD

Smoke the shoulder for a few hours for flavor and bark, then finish it covered in the oven until it shreds. A very versatile meat: pile it on buns, or use it for tacos, nachos, or baked potatoes.

Ingredients

- 1 bone-in pork shoulder (Boston butt), 6–8 lb (4–6 lb if boneless)
- 2 onions, quartered
- Apple or hickory wood, for smoke
- Buns or hard rolls

Carolina rub (doubled)

- 3 Tbsp brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp paprika
- 1 Tbsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

Finish (choose one or more)

- Carolina Vinegar Sauce: the traditional one, sharp and thin
- Sweet & Smoky BBQ Sauce: sweeter, for sandwiches
- Alabama White Sauce: creamy and tangy (all three are in Sauces)

Method

1. Mix the rub and press it all over the pork. If you have time, let it sit uncovered in the fridge overnight.
2. Heat the smoker to 225–250°F. Smoke the pork, fat side up, 3–4 hours, until it has a deep mahogany bark and reads about 160–170°F.
3. Heat the oven to 300°F. Put the quartered onions in a roasting pan or Dutch oven, set the pork on top, and add ½ cup of water or apple juice (and a few spoonfuls of Carolina sauce, if you like). Cover tightly and roast 2–3 hours, until the meat reaches 195–205°F and a fork twists in easily.
4. Rest 20–30 minutes, covered. Shred, discarding the fat and bone, and toss it with the juices in the pan. Sprinkle over some Carolina sauce, then serve on buns with the onions and pass the sauces.
5. **No smoker?** Roast covered at 300°F about 5–6 hours, or use a slow cooker on low 8–10 hours (the original method), with 1 tsp smoked paprika added to the rub.

Notes

Make ahead. Cool the pork in its juices, refrigerate overnight, and skim the fat before shredding and reheating in the juices. Leftovers keep best stored in their juices.