



THE OFFICIAL TAILGATE COOKBOOK

PORK-INSPIRED TAILGATE PARTY

*Championship pork recipes crafted for Rocky Mountain tailgates,
stadium lots, and kickoff watch parties.*

★ THE MAINS: Carnitas, Sliders & Burnt Ends

★ STARTERS: Smoky Pulled Pork & Skillet Dips

★ SIDES: Honey-Chipotle Slow-Baked Beans

★ DRINKS & SWEETS: Micheladas, Punch & Brownies

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★ THE MAINS

- 01 **Pork Carnitas "Walking Tacos"** **Page 3**
Individual corn chips, Cotija, onions, salsa verde & crema
- 02 **Green Chili Pork Smash Sliders** **Page 4**
Pepper jack, roasted Colorado green chilis & chipotle crema
- 03 **Bacon-Wrapped Pork Belly Burnt Ends** **Page 5**
Smoky glazed pork belly cubes skewered with crisp bacon

★ SIDES & STARTERS

- 04 **Smoky Pulled Pork Dip** **Page 6**
Bubbling sharp cheddar skillet dip with thick kettle chips
- 05 **Grilled Bratwurst & Kielbasa Platter** **Page 7**
Four specialty craft mustards, pickles & warm pretzel bites
- 06 **Honey-Chipotle Baked Beans** **Page 8**
Simmered pork belly, bacon, dark molasses & Colorado honey
- 07 **Jalapeño Popper Dip with Pork Rinds** **Page 9**
Cream cheese, cheddar & bacon with crunchy pork rind dippers

★ DRINKS & SWEETS

- 08 **Pigskin Michelada** **Page 10**
Cold lager, lime & Clamato with smoky candied bacon garnish
- 09 **Smoky Apple Cider Bourbon Punch** **Page 11**
Autumn apple cider, craft bourbon, ginger beer & maple
- 10 **Bacon-Chocolate Bourbon Brownies** **Page 12**
Fudgy bourbon chocolate brownies with candied maple bacon
- ★ **Beer Pairings & Temp Guide** **Page 13**
Pork-friendly craft pilsners and safe cooking temperatures

PORK CARNITAS "WALKING TACOS"

Citrus-braised, crispy pork carnitas served straight out of individual corn chip bags with fresh fiesta toppings.



YIELD / SERVINGS	PREP TIME	COOK / HEAT TIME	DRINK PAIRING
12 servings	20 mins	Slow cook 4–8 hrs, Broil 8 mins	Crisp Mexican Lager or Local Craft Pilsner



INGREDIENTS

- 4–5 lbs boneless pork shoulder, cut into 3-inch chunks
- Seasoning: 1 Tbsp kosher salt, 2 tsp ground cumin, 2 tsp Mexican oregano, 2 tsp smoked paprika, 1 tsp black pepper
- 6 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 white onion, quartered
- 3 bay leaves
- Juice of 1 orange and 1 lime
- 1 cup chicken stock or Mexican beer
- 12 individual 1-oz corn chip bags
- Toppings: 2 cups salsa verde, 1 cup crumbled Cotija, 1 cup diced white onion, Mexican crema, chopped cilantro, 12 lime wedges

PREPARATION STEPS

- 1 SEASON**
Coat the pork shoulder thoroughly with the seasoning mixture.
- 2 SLOW COOK**
Place pork, garlic, quartered onion, bay leaves, citrus juice and stock or beer in a slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW 4–5 hours, until fork-tender.
- 3 SHRED & CRISP**
Discard bay leaves. Shred pork and spread on a sheet pan with ½ cup cooking liquid. Broil 5–8 minutes, until the edges are crisp.
- 4 BUILD**
Open each chip bag and lightly crush the chips. Add carnitas, then top with salsa verde, Cotija, diced onion, crema, cilantro, and a lime wedge. Serve with forks.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

For the crispiest carnitas at a stadium tailgate, shred the slow-cooked meat ahead of time and give it a quick 3-minute hard sear on a portable flat-top griddle.

GREEN CHILI PORK SMASH SLIDERS

Griddled lean pork patties crusted on high heat, topped with fire-roasted green chiles, melted pepper jack, and garlic-lime crema.



YIELD / SERVINGS

Makes 24 sliders

PREP TIME

20 mins

COOK / HEAT TIME

15 mins

DRINK PAIRING

Hoppy Pale Ale or Rocky Mountain Pilsner



INGREDIENTS

- 4 lbs lean ground pork
- 24 slider buns
- 2 cups roasted green chiles, chopped
- 12 slices pepper jack cheese, halved
- 1 cup chipotle mayo (or garlic-lime crema)
- Sliced onion, lettuce, and tomato
- Seasoning: 1 Tbsp kosher salt, 2 tsp smoked paprika, 2 tsp garlic powder, 2 tsp onion powder, 1 tsp black pepper, 1 Tbsp brown sugar

PREPARATION STEPS

- 1 PREP**
Divide pork into 24 equal balls. Combine the seasonings in a small bowl.
- 2 SMASH & SEAR**
Place pork on a hot griddle, season, smash thin, and cook 2–3 minutes. Flip.
- 3 TOP & MELT**
Add green chiles and pepper jack. Cook until pork reaches 160°F and cheese melts.
- 4 ASSEMBLE**
Layer toasted buns with chipotle mayo (or garlic-lime crema), pork patties, and desired toppings. Secure with skewers.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

Press down hard with parchment paper under your burger press for that signature lacy, caramelized smashed edge that locks in maximum flavor.

BACON-WRAPPED PORK BELLY "BURNT END" SKEWERS

Smoked pork belly cubes wrapped in bacon, caramelized in bourbon BBQ glaze, and skewered for easy tailgating.



YIELD / SERVINGS

Serves 12–16

PREP TIME

25 mins

COOK / HEAT TIME

3 hours

DRINK PAIRING

Amber Ale or Bourbon Barrel
Porter



INGREDIENTS

- 4–5 lbs pork belly
- 1½–2 lbs regular-cut bacon
- 1 cup bourbon BBQ sauce
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp smoked paprika
- 1 Tbsp kosher salt
- 2 tsp black pepper
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp onion powder
- Crispy shallots, sliced scallions, and pickled jalapeños
- Soaked bamboo skewers

PREPARATION STEPS

- 1 CUBE & SEASON**
Cut pork belly into 1½-inch cubes. Combine the dry seasonings and coat the pork.
- 2 SMOKE**
Smoke at 250°F for 2½–3 hours, until browned and tender but still holding their shape.
- 3 SAUCE & WRAP**
Toss cubes with bourbon BBQ sauce. Wrap each cube with ½ strip bacon and secure with a skewer.
- 4 CRISP**
Grill or broil for 10–15 minutes, turning often, until the bacon is crisp and the glaze is sticky.
- 5 FINISH**
Top with crispy shallots, scallions, and pickled jalapeños. Add extra BBQ sauce, if desired.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

Keep raw skewers refrigerated until ready to crisp over the tailgate grill. The cold bacon cooks more evenly without overcooking the tender smoked interior.



SMOKY PULLED PORK DIP WITH KETTLE CHIPS

Tender pulled pork folded into a bubbling skillet of cream cheese, cheddar, and sweet barbecue sauce.

YIELD / SERVINGS

8–10 servings

PREP TIME

15 mins

COOK / HEAT TIME

25 mins

DRINK PAIRING

Crisp Craft Pilsner or Amber Lager



PREPARATION STEPS

- 1 MIX**
Heat oven to 350°F. In a 10-inch oven-safe skillet, combine pork, cream cheese, cheddar, BBQ sauce, sour cream, garlic, jalapeño, and 2 green onions.
- 2 BAKE**
Bake for 20–25 minutes, until hot and bubbly.
- 3 GARNISH & SERVE**
Top with the remaining green onion and a drizzle of BBQ sauce. Serve warm with kettle chips.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

Transport warm in an insulated casserole carrier or keep warm directly on a low-heat zone of your tailgate grill using a cast-iron skillet.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb smoked pulled pork, finely chopped
- 8 oz cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups shredded cheddar
- 1 cup smoky BBQ sauce, plus extra for garnish
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 green onions, chopped and divided
- 1 jalapeño, finely chopped
- Kettle chips, for serving

GRILLED BRATWURST & KIELBASA PLATTER WITH ASSORTED MUSTARDS

Charred artisan pork sausages sliced into party bites, served with four specialty mustards, pickles, sauerkraut, and warm pretzel bites.



YIELD / SERVINGS	PREP TIME	COOK / HEAT TIME	DRINK PAIRING
Serves 8–10	10 mins	10 mins	German Hefeweizen or Colorado Festbier



INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs assorted fully cooked pork sausages (bratwurst, kielbasa, cheddar jalapeño, etc.)
- 1 Tbsp neutral oil
- 1 Tbsp favorite spice blend, optional
- 1/2 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup whole-grain mustard
- 1/2 cup spicy brown mustard
- 1/2 cup beer mustard
- 1 jar pickle spears, olive mix, or warm sauerkraut
- 12 oz pretzel bites, warmed
- Cocktail picks, for serving

PREPARATION STEPS

- 1 PREHEAT**
Heat grill to medium, 375–400°F.
- 2 SEASON**
Lightly coat the whole sausages with oil and your favorite spice blend, if desired.
- 3 GRILL & SLICE**
Grill whole sausages for 8–10 minutes, turning often, until browned and heated through. Rest 3 minutes, then cut into 1-inch bites.
- 4 ARRANGE & SERVE**
Place sausage bites on a platter with the four mustards, pickles or olives, warm sauerkraut, and warm pretzel bites. Serve with cocktail picks.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

Grill the links whole to preserve all the natural juices, then slice on a wood cutting board right in front of your guests for mouthwatering presentation.

COLORADO HONEY-CHIPOTLE BAKED BEANS WITH PORK BELLY

Slow-simmered navy beans packed with tender pork belly cubes, bacon, dark molasses, and sweet Colorado honey.



YIELD / SERVINGS

Serves 12–16

PREP TIME

Soak overnight + 20 mins

COOK / HEAT TIME

3½ hours

DRINK PAIRING

Bourbon Barrel Stout or Robust Porter



INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs dried navy beans
- 1 lb pork belly, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 8 oz bacon, diced
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 3–4 chipotle peppers in adobo, chopped
- ½ cup Colorado honey
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup molasses
- 1 Tbsp yellow mustard
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- Parsley and cornbread, for serving

PREPARATION STEPS

- 1 SOAK & SIMMER**
Soak beans overnight. Drain, cover with fresh water and simmer 60–90 minutes, until just tender. Drain, reserving 2 cups cooking liquid.
- 2 BROWN THE PORK**
In a Dutch oven, cook pork belly and bacon for 8–10 minutes. Remove meat; sauté onion for 5 minutes.
- 3 COMBINE**
Heat oven to 325°F. Return meat to pot. Stir in beans, chipotles, honey, brown sugar, molasses, mustard, seasonings, and 1½ cups reserved liquid.
- 4 BAKE & SERVE**
Bake uncovered for 1½–2 hours, stirring occasionally. Add reserved liquid if needed. Garnish with parsley and serve with cornbread.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

These beans taste even better made a day in advance as the pork belly, honey, and smoky chipotle flavors deepen overnight.

COLORADO PIGSKIN JALAPEÑO POPPER DIP WITH PORK RINDS

Molten cheddar and cream cheese dip baked with crispy bacon and diced jalapeños, topped with crunchy crushed pork rinds.



YIELD / SERVINGS

Serves 10–12

PREP TIME

15 mins

COOK / HEAT TIME

25 mins

DRINK PAIRING

Dry Craft Hard Cider or Crisp
Pilsner



INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 cups shredded cheddar
- 8 oz bacon, cooked and crumbled, divided
- 4 large jalapeños, seeded and finely diced
- ½ cup sliced green onions, divided
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- 1 cup crushed pork rinds, for topping
- 1 large bag plain pork rinds, for dipping

PREPARATION STEPS

1 PREP

Heat oven to 375°F. Reserve ¼ of the bacon and 2 Tbsp green onions for garnish.

2 MIX

In a bowl, combine cream cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, cheddar, jalapeños, garlic powder, smoked paprika, and the remaining bacon and green onions.

3 TOP & BAKE

Spread in a 10-inch oven-safe skillet. Top with crushed pork rinds. Bake for 20–25 minutes, until hot and bubbly.

4 GARNISH & SERVE

Top with reserved bacon and green onions. Serve hot with pork rind dippers.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

Crush the pork rinds coarsely right before sprinkling over the dip so they retain maximum crunch during baking.



PIGSKIN MICHELADA WITH SMOKY BACON RIM

Crisp Mexican lager with Clamato, fresh lime, and hot sauce, rimmed with bacon salt and crowned with candied bacon.

YIELD / SERVINGS

Makes 1 drink

PREP TIME

10 mins

COOK / HEAT TIME

Instant assembly

DRINK PAIRING

Green Chili Smash Sliders or
Burnt Ends



INGREDIENTS

- 12 oz cold lager
- 4 oz tomato juice or Clamato
- 1 oz fresh lime juice
- 1–2 tsp hot sauce
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- ½ tsp soy sauce
- Ice
- 1 slice bacon, cooked crisp and finely crumbled
- 1 Tbsp coarse sugar
- ¼ tsp chipotle powder
- 1 strip candied bacon, for garnish
- Lime wedge and jalapeño slice, for garnish

PREPARATION STEPS

- 1 MAKE THE RIM**
On a small plate, mix crumbled bacon, sugar, and chipotle powder. Rub the glass rim with lime, then dip it in the mixture.
- 2 BUILD**
Fill the glass with ice. Add tomato juice, lime juice, hot sauce, Worcestershire, and soy sauce.
- 3 POUR & STIR**
Slowly pour in the cold lager. Stir gently to combine.
- 4 GARNISH**
Add the candied bacon, lime wedge, and jalapeño slice. Serve immediately.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

Keep a batch of the candied bacon strips cooked and chilled in a zip-top bag—they double as drink stirrers and stadium snacks!



SMOKY APPLE CIDER BOURBON PUNCH

Apple cider spiked with Kentucky bourbon, spiced ginger beer, pure maple syrup, and a whisper of liquid smoke.

YIELD / SERVINGS

Serves 8–10

PREP TIME

10 mins + 1 hr chill

COOK / HEAT TIME

Instant assembly

DRINK PAIRING

Honey-Chipotle Baked Beans or
Sliders



PREPARATION STEPS

1 MIX

In a large pitcher, stir together the cider, bourbon, lemon juice, maple syrup, and liquid smoke.

2 CHILL

Refrigerate for 1 hour.

3 SERVE

Stir in ginger beer. Pour over ice and garnish with apple slices, cinnamon sticks, and candied bacon.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

For cold fall tailgate days, this punch can also be warmed in a slow cooker (add ginger beer right into individual cups when serving).

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups apple cider
- 2 cups bourbon
- 1 cup ginger beer
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup
- ¼ tsp liquid smoke
- Ice
- Apple slices, cinnamon sticks & candied bacon, for garnish



BACON-CHOCOLATE BOURBON BROWNIES

Decadent dark chocolate brownies swirled with fine bourbon and studded with candied chipotle-maple bacon.

YIELD / SERVINGS	PREP TIME	COOK / HEAT TIME	DRINK PAIRING
Makes 16 brownies	20 mins	30–35 mins	Bourbon Coffee, Vanilla Porter, or Cold Milk



INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz bacon, cooked crisp and chopped
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup
- ¼ tsp chipotle powder
- 10 oz dark chocolate, chopped
- ½ cup butter
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs
- ¼ cup bourbon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- ⅔ cup semisweet chocolate chips

PREPARATION STEPS

- 1 PREP**
Heat oven to 350°F. Line a 9-inch square pan with parchment paper.
- 2 GLAZE THE BACON**
Toss cooked bacon with maple syrup and chipotle powder. Reserve one-third for the top.
- 3 MIX**
Melt dark chocolate with butter; cool slightly. In a bowl, whisk sugar, eggs, bourbon, and vanilla. Whisk in the chocolate mixture. Fold in flour and salt, then stir in chocolate chips and the remaining bacon.
- 4 TOP & BAKE**
Spread batter in the pan and sprinkle with reserved bacon. Bake 30–35 minutes, until a toothpick has moist crumbs. Cool before cutting.

★ CHEF'S TAILGATE TIP

Bake these brownies the evening before the game. Slicing them when fully chilled yields clean, bakery-sharp squares.



LOCAL CRAFT BEER PAIRINGS & TAILGATE GUIDE

Nothing complements the savory, rich nuances of Colorado pork like an ice-cold, locally brewed craft beer. Use this championship pairing and temperature guide to master your next stadium tailgate!

PORK TAILGATE FAVORITE	RECOMMENDED BEER STYLE	WHY IT WORKS
Pork Carnitas Walking Tacos	Mexican Lager or Crisp Pilsner	Bright carbonation and lime-friendly malt slice through rich braised carnitas.
Green Chili Pork Smash Sliders	Colorado Hazy IPA or Pale Ale	Citrusy hops accentuate the roasted heat of Colorado green chiles.
Bacon Pork Belly Burnt Ends	Amber Ale or Bourbon Barrel Porter	Caramelized malt matches the charred brown sugar and bourbon BBQ glaze.
Bratwurst & Kielbasa Platter	German Hefeweizen or Festbier	Yeasty clove and banana notes harmonize with whole-grain mustard and kraut.
Bacon Bourbon Brownies	Coffee Oatmeal Stout or Milk Stout	Roasted barley notes amplify dark chocolate, bourbon, and candied bacon.

★ OFFICIAL PORK COOKING TEMPERATURE STANDARD

PORK CUT / PREPARATION	TARGET INTERNAL TEMP	RESTING & SERVING ADVICE
Ground Pork & Smash Sliders	160°F (71°C)	Sear fast and hot on griddle for maximum caramelized crust.
Pork Belly & Smoked Ends	200°F–205°F	Low and slow smoke renders intramuscular fat into buttery bites.
Pork Shoulder (Carnitas)	200°F–205°F	Cook until completely fork-tender, then broil for crispy edges.
Fresh Chops, Roasts & Tenderloin	145°F (63°C)	Requires a 3-minute rest to ensure tender, juicy meat with a blush of pink.
Precooked Sausages & Brats	165°F (heated through)	Grill whole over medium heat to prevent burst skins and lost juices.

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