

Ring in the New Year with North Carolina Pork

We have a variety of new recipes using North Carolina pork to keep you warm in January. These are perfect for family dinners, travel and watching football with friends. Something new you might not know about whole muscle cuts of pork – cook them to 145 degrees and give them a three minute rest. The pork will still be a little pink and that’s OK. This keeps the pork tender and juicy. Think of it as if you were cooking a steak. If you like your steak a little pink, then cook your pork to 145 degrees. If you like your steak well-done, then go to 160 degrees. Check out the North Carolina Pork Council’s website (www.ncpork.org) for more information and a cooking chart.

Pork Burgers with molasses mustard glaze

1 pound ground pork

½ teaspoon dried crushed basil

½ teaspoon dried ground sage

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

Salt and Pepper

3 hamburger buns (grilled or steamed)

3 slices Pepper jack cheese

3 slices bacon (optional)

3 slices lettuce (optional)

3 slices orange pepper (optional)

3 slices tomato (optional)

Mix together the pork and spices and make into 3 round patties. Grill or pan fry (spray pan with cooking spray) until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees. Top with a slice of pepper jack cheese until melted. Serve with molasses mustard glaze, mayo, bacon, lettuce, tomato and orange pepper.

Glaze:

¼ cup Dijon

2 Tablespoons whole grain mustard

¼ cup molasses

Mix together and serve with pork burgers.

Lisa's Notes: Great alternative to the traditional burger. Mix and match the fixings to your taste and the spices, give rosemary a try. The burgers are delicious with sweet potato fries.

Sausage and Tortellini Soup

Cooking spray or olive oil

2 packages ground sweet Italian sausage or remove the casings from the links

2 (8oz.) packages fresh, sliced mushrooms

1 (9oz.) bag fresh baby spinach

2 (14oz.) cans diced tomatoes

2 (32oz.) cartons low sodium chicken broth

1 (20oz.) package fresh Three Cheese Tortellini (in the dairy case)

Grated Parmesan cheese for garnish, optional

Spray large stockpot with cooking spray or coat bottom with olive oil. Cook the sausage over medium high heat until no longer pink and crumbled. Once the sausage is cooked, add the mushrooms and sauté for 5-8 minutes. Then add the bag of spinach and cook until wilted, stirring occasionally. Add the tomatoes and the chicken broth and bring to a boil. Then add the fresh tortellini and simmer on low for 10-15 minutes. Serve soup and garnish with parmesan cheese.

Lisa's Notes: This is a hearty light soup that is quick and easy to make. Perfect on those cold nights. Serve with some crusty French bread.

Wolf Pack Specials

1 pound hot sausage

1 pound hamburger

1 pound Velveeta cheese, cut into cubes

2 packages dinner rolls, slice entire package horizontally

Brown together the sausage and hamburger until no longer pink. Drain the grease. Add the cubed Velveeta and stir until melted. Divide mixture evenly and spread onto rolls.

Lisa's Notes: These are perfect for tailgating and for traveling. They slide right back into the packaging. They are easy to re-heat one at the time or the entire package. Pop them in the microwave for a few seconds.

House-Autry Mills Breaded Creamy Bacon Roll-ups

6 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes. – Freeze time of 1 hour

Total time: Approximately 30 minutes

6-8 tortillas (6 inch), warmed in the microwave

1 package of cream cheese, softened slightly

½ cup precooked shredded chicken

½ cup crispy, crumbled bacon, divided

½ teaspoon each, cumin & rosemary

Pinch of salt

1 cup buttermilk

1 egg

1 cup House-Autry Mills Medium Hot Breader

2 cups peanut oil heated in fryer or heavy bottom pan to 350 degrees

In a bowl, combine cream cheese, chicken, ¼ cup bacon, spices and salt. Mix well. Cover tortilla's with plastic wrap and warm in the microwave for 10-15 seconds. Spoon 1 inch round cheese mixture into the middle of each tortilla, roll up and freeze at least 1 hour. Prepare fryer. Beat buttermilk and egg until well mixed. Dip each tortilla roll half in buttermilk/egg mixture then coat with House-Autry Breader and remaining bacon crumbles and then deep fry until golden brown. Allow to cool slightly and serve.

Lisa's Notes: This recipe took home first place in the House-Autry Mills cooking contest at the NC State Fair in 2011. Domino Ireland used bacon in the filling and the crust. You can fix these ahead of time and then just fry them up as your guests arrive. This is a great appetizer!

Roast Pork with bacon jam glaze

2 pound pork loin

Salt and pepper

1/2 pound sliced bacon
1/2 cup diced onion
2 cloves garlic diced
2 Tablespoons apple cider vinegar
¼ cup packed dark brown sugar
¼ cup maple syrup

Arrange slices of bacon on a baking sheet lined with foil. Turn oven to 400°F and cook bacon for 15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove bacon from oven and drain fat reserving 1 T to fry the onions and garlic. Pour 1 T bacon fat into a frying pan and add onions, garlic, and brown sugar. Sauté on low heat for 5 minutes. Add the apple cider vinegar and maple syrup. Bring to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes until glaze begins to thicken. Transfer onion mixture and bacon to food processor and pulse until coarsely chopped.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Rub salt and pepper over outside of tenderloin. Glaze outside with the bacon jam glaze. Bake in oven for 45-50 minutes or until pork reaches 145 degrees and give it a three minute rest. Serves 6

Lisa's Notes: Jennifer Huntington of Raleigh took home the blue ribbon in the Bacon! Tar Heel Pork Challenge sponsored by the NC Pork Council with this winning pork loin. The glaze is rich and tangy. This pork loin is quick to prepare and will impress a crowd.