

Trend Watch

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Smithfield Knows Best That 'BBQ Means Pork'

We're continuing our stride to provide our customers with valuable trend data, actionable business insights and groundbreaking menu ideas – this time with a focus on BBQ! BBQ is a beloved consumer favorite – 96% of them, in fact, eat BBQ occasionally or frequently.¹ What's more, our research shows that pork is an in-demand protein in this category, comprising some of the most-favored BBQ entrees by consumers.

Because BBQ is so popular, it's an easy opportunity for operators to capitalize business on. BBQ translates across multiple dayparts and lends itself well to many different cooking styles and products. Menus can be easily tailored to include quick-cook or low-and-slow applications and to suit the particular needs and specifications of whatever the establishment.

Our next two newsletters will explore why "BBQ Means Pork" by examining the versatility of pork and regional BBQ flavors, shedding light on BBQ cooking technique and talking through diner preferences and trending menu applications.

Satisfying the tastes of BBQ lovers everywhere starts with pork. Smithfield is here to provide operators with the inspiration and education they need to make their BBQ business flourish.

BBQ's Top Two

There are two pork dishes that consumers automatically crave when they hear the word "barbeque": pulled pork and ribs.² One of the reasons these two applications are so popular is because they are hard to pull off at home – at least not without putting in a lot of time and effort to properly slow-cook the meat, and even then, things can go awry.

Additionally, these are both great cuts of pork that provide a blank canvas for flavors – both dishes can be either dry-rubbed or sauced, depending on what a chef wants to showcase and what diner preferences are popular in the region. Pork is more forgiving if a chef wants to explore tastes that are a little bolder, too. The neutral taste of pork stands up well to any flavor profile: spicy, tangy, sweet or savory. The same cannot necessarily be said for other commonly used proteins.

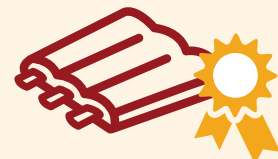
4%

growth over the past 2 years. Pork Ribs are the fastest growing pork dish at lunch and dinner.

PULLED PORK

**53%**consumers likely to order at lunch³**60%**consumers likely to order at dinner⁴

PORK RIBS

**50%**consumers likely to order at lunch⁵**62%**consumers likely to order at dinner⁶

¹ Datassential, FoodBytes, 2015. ²⁻⁶ Technomic, 2017 Center of Plate: Beef & Pork Consumer Trend Report

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PULLED PORK AND RIBS WERE ALSO STAR PLATES AT OUR RECENT BBQ INNOVATION LAB IN SAN ANTONIO. CHECK IT OUT!



Chimichurri Ribs
Frank Dominguez,
Corporate Chef,
Smithfield



Pulled Pork Sliders with Bacon & Caramelized Onions
Jeff Thalrose, Pitmaster,
MeatBoneZ BBQ



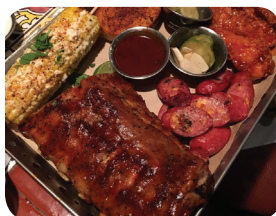
Memphis-Style Baby Back Ribs
Melissa Cookston,
World Champion Pitmaster,
Memphis BBQ Company



Dr Pepper Glazed Ribs
Brian West,
Former Executive Chef,
Smoke: The Restaurant

BBQ LTOs Start Heating Up Summer

Many of the top national chains jumped on the trendy BBQ limited-time-offer train way before summer even hit this year, with some unveiling limited-edition BBQ menu items and others bringing back fan favorites from the past. In fact, the operator incidence of BBQ among the Top 500 has grown consistently over the past five years – 57% of the Top 500 offer pork dishes with barbecue flavors today, compared with 48% in 2011.⁷ From pizza to burgers to platters to bowls, consumers have had an abundance of BBQ options to choose from this spring. Take a look at some of what these key players are doing utilizing BBQ pork:



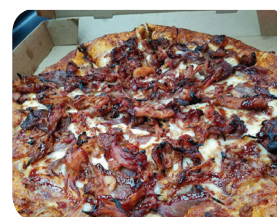
CHILI'S
The Expanded
Smokehouse Combo



BURGER KING
BBQ Bacon
King Sandwich



ARBY'S
Smokehouse Pork
Belly Sandwich



LITTLE CAESARS
Smokehouse Pizza



SHAKE SHACK
Limited-Edition
BBQ Menu

BOJANGLES' – Pulled Pork Bowl
CARL'S JR. – Baby Back Rib Burger
QUIZNOS – Slow Roasted Pulled Pork
WHITE CASTLE – Brisket Slider
DAVE & BUSTER'S – Americana Rib Promotion
JRECK SUBS – Smoked Pulled Pork

⁷ Technomic, 2017 Center of Plate: Beef & Pork Consumer Trend Report

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Barbecue Without Borders

BBQ has strong roots in American history, and over the years, each region of the country has crafted signature BBQ styles that showcase the flavors and seasonings that are favored in the area. There was clear division between the type of BBQ served in Texas versus Kansas City, for example. But with the emergence of the modern millennial palate, and its subsequent desire for less of the same, American BBQ is becoming less about maintaining those traditional regional flavors and more about blending in global influences. Just like America itself, BBQ has become a melting pot.



In previous newsletters, we reported that the younger generations were demanding that more ethnic flavors be showcased in their breakfast choices – that trend continues into the barbecue category. Technomic reports that consumers want more Latin and Asian flavors to be infused into their BBQ and are demanding items like Korean barbecue pork tacos, pork char siu and tonkatsu, as well as ancho-rubbed pork dishes and Cuban preparations.

Experimenting with different global flavors is a great way to spice up a tried-and-true BBQ menu. Below we highlight three non-American BBQ styles that could provide some inspiration for your menu.

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Gogigui

ORIGIN: KOREA

Cooking Preparation: Gogigui literally translates to “meat roast.” Proteins are roasted via charcoal or gas on a grill that is built into the table, supplying diners with an interactive experience.

Key Flavors: Sweet and savory, with a little spice through the use of ingredients like: soy sauce, sesame oil, rice wine vinegar, ginger, garlic, chili pepper, black pepper, scallions



Shawarma

ORIGIN: MIDDLE EAST

Cooking Preparation: Similar to churrasco, shawarma is meat that is roasted on a spit, except the spit is kept rotating throughout the day. Meat is then shaved thinly from the spit and used often used in sandwiches.

Key Flavors: Slightly floral and smoky through the use of fragrant ingredients like: cumin, clove, coriander, cardamom, cinnamon, lemon juice, black pepper, garlic, paprika



Churrasco

ORIGIN: LATIN AMERICA

Cooking Preparation: Meat is typically roasted on skewers or spits that are placed above hot embers coming from either a wood or charcoal fire. The meat is then sliced from the spit and served.

Key Flavors: Spicy and smoky through the bold use of ingredients like: cilantro, olive oil, garlic, onion, paprika, red chili flakes