

# FOOD

To make life easier for meal preparations, the 'Food Section' will present an assortment of hearty, healthy and user-friendly winter and holiday recipes. For recipe requests or suggestions contact: SharonS@portlandobserver.com Subject: Food Section



## Slow Cooker Hickory BBQ Pork Sandwiches

Prep Time: 10 min  
Total Time: 6 hr 10 min  
Makes: 8 servings, 1 sandwich each

- 1 boneless pork shoulder (2 lb.)
- 1 env. Onion soup mix
- 2 small onions, sliced
- 1 cup Hickory Smoke Barbecue Sauce
- 8 sandwich buns split
- 8 cheese slices (optional)

*This is a really hearty hot sandwich that doesn't take a lot of attention while cooking.*

1. PLACE meat in slow cooker. Top with soup mix, onions and barbecue sauce; cover with lid.
2. COOK 4 to 6 hours on HIGH (or 8 to 10 hours on LOW). Remove meat from slow cooker; cut into small pieces or shred with fork. Return meat to slow cooker. Mix with sauce
3. SPOON meat mixture evenly onto bottom halves of buns; top with Singles. Cover with tops of buns.

## 5 Spices That Fight Disease

Add a little healthy flavor to your life

Every cook knows that spices add zero-calories, but big flavor. At last, researchers are unearthing the science behind their healing powers

**Ginger** The benefits: Whether you have motion or morning sickness or just an ordinary upset tummy, ginger can bring you some relief. Plus, ginger eases migraine and arthritis pain. How to spice it up: Toss one third of a teaspoon of fresh or powdered ginger into stir-fries or cookie batter, sip ginger beer or tea, or try spicy candied ginger.

**Cinnamon** The benefits: Consuming about one-quarter to one teaspoon a day of this crowd-pleasing spice can reduce glucose (blood sugar) and lower levels of triglycerides (a type of fat), LDL (or "bad") cholesterol, and total cholesterol in people with type 2 diabetes, according to a recent study. Cinnamon also has antibacterial properties, killing bacteria that can cause food poisoning and neutralizing germs that lead to bad breath and cavities. How to spice it up: Ground cinnamon can be mixed into applesauce or pie filling, hot cider, muffin batter, or oatmeal. Or swirl a cinnamon stick in your tea.

**Black Pepper** The benefits: Piperine — a pungent substance in black pepper — increases enzyme activity and blood flow, which aid in the body's absorption of nutrients and enhance digestion. How to spice it up: Grind pepper on just about any dish, or toss a few pinches in dressings and marinades.

**Turmeric** The benefits: Curcumin, turmeric's bright yellow pigment, may reduce your Alzheimer's risk by limiting the

buildup of destructive proteins in the brain that is characteristic of the disease. It may also put the brakes on gastric and colon cancer by slowing the effects of harmful GI bacteria and smoothing digestive system function. How to spice it up: Add yellow mustard (which contains some curcumin) to sandwiches. Curry powder blends, which include turmeric, pack a more powerful curcumin punch; use in meat and seafood dishes, to season fries, or mix into ketchup.



**Red Chili Pepper Flakes** The benefits: Capsaicin, the main phytochemical in red peppers, works as an anti-inflammatory and anticoagulant, thus preventing clotting and hardening of the arteries. It also helps lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels, reducing your risk of a heart attack. Studies indicate it may even neutralize carcinogens and help boost your immune system. How to spice it up: Sprinkle these flakes on pizza or into tomato sauces, veggies, or fruit salads. If you're buying fresh or dried whole peppers, select brightly colored ones; the duller their hue, the less potent they'll be.

## West African Soup

*This soup is native to West Africa (Nigeria) It is a great soup for those who like to try something different every once in a while. This is a unique way to use pumpkin seeds. Any combination of crab, shrimp and smoked fish can be used in place of the shrimp. Drained, smoked oysters and chicken can be used in place of the beef.*



Original recipe yield: 6 to 8 servings  
PREP TIME: 15 Min  
COOK TIME: 1 Hr 20 Min  
READY IN 1 Hr 35 Min

### DIRECTIONS

1. Place pumpkin seeds in a blender and blend for 30 to 40 seconds or until mixture are a powdery paste. Set aside.
2. Wash beef and cut into bite-size cubes. Season with salt. In large pot, heat oil over medium-high heat for 4 to 5 minutes. Add beef and sauté for 3 to 5 minutes or until brown but not cooked through.
3. Place tomatoes, onions, and pepper in a blender and blend for about 30 seconds or until smooth. Add tomato mixture to meat, reduce heat to medium-low, and cover. Cook for 40 to 50 minutes or until meat is tender.
4. Add tomato sauce, water, and shrimp and simmer for 10 minutes.
5. Add spinach and ground pumpkin seeds and continue to simmer 10 minutes more.

### INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 1/2 pounds cubed beef stew meat
- 1/2 cup peanut oil
- 2 large tomatoes, chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 habanera peppers, seeded and minced
- 18 ounces tomato sauce
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 2 pounds fresh shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 pound fresh spinach, washed and chopped

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