Food

History of Pork in America

Hernando de Soto was "the father of the American pork industry." He landed with America's first 13 pigs at Tampa Bay, Fla. in 1539. Native Americans reportedly became very fond of the taste of pork. Three years later his herd had grown to 700 not including the ones his troops had consumed, those that ran away and became today's feral pigs or razorbacks).

Asparagus Pesto with Gnocchi and Ham

Welcome spring with cubed leftover ham and asparagus

Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 20 minutes
Servings: 4

Ingredients

2 cups ham, cubed
12 ounces asparagus
3/4 cup basil leaves
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
1/3 cup walnut pieces
1/4 cup olive oil, OR cooking oil
3 tablespoons water
1 tablespoons garlic, minced (6 cloves)
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1 16-oz package potato gnocchi, OR 8 ounces rotini

Cooking Directions

Snap off and discard woody portions of asparagus. Cut into 1-inch pieces. Cook in a small amount of boiling water about 5 minutes or until tender. Drain and cool.

For pesto, in a food processor or blender, combine asparagus, basil, cheese, walnuts, olive oil, water, garlic and pepper. Cover and process or blend until nearly smooth, scraping sides occasionally. Divide pesto into thirds. Transfer 2 portions to freezer containers. Freeze for up to 3 months. Set aside remaining portion.

Prepare gnocchi or rotini according to package directions.

Meanwhile, coat a skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Cook ham cubes in skillet until heated through. Stir remaining portion of the pesto into ham cubes; heat through. Drain gnocchi and toss with pesto-ham mixture.

Nutrition Information

Calories: 355 calories; Protein: 23 grams; Fat: 19 grams; Sodium: 1070 milligrams; Cholesterol: 63 milligrams; Saturated Fat: 8 grams; Carbohydrates: 22 grams; Fiber: 2 grams

Slow Cooker Pulled Pork

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 8 hours
Servings: 8 - 10

Ingredients

3 pounds boneless pork shoulder (butt), or sirloin roast
2 tablespoons chili powder
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 tablespoon canola oil, or other neutral-flavored oil
1/2 cup chicken broth

Cooking Directions

Line a 9 by 13 inch baking pan with foil and place the pork in the pan. In a small bowl, combine the chili powder, salt, and cayenne. Rub the mixture over all sides of the meat, pressing it to adhere (if the meat is tied together with twine or netting, just rub the seasoning right over it). In a large skillet over medium-high heat, warm the oil. Add the pork and brown on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer the meat to a slow cooker.

Add the broth to the skillet, scraping up browned bits. Add the broth to the slow cooker, cover, and cook until the pork is very tender, 6 - 8 hours on low or 4 - 5 on high.

Transfer the meat to a cutting board and let rest 10 to 15 minutes. Use two forks to shred meat into bite-sized pieces. Moisten/season with cooking juices to taste

Nutrition Information

Calories: 240 calories; Protein: 32 grams; Fat: 11 grams; Sodium: 540 milligrams; Cholesterol: 90 milligrams; Saturated Fat: 3 grams; Carbohydrates: 1 grams; Fiber: 0 grams

Recipes and photo courtesy of National Pork Board. For more information about pork, visit PorkBeInspired.com.