

Merlot Recipes

Juicy Pork Sandwich

It is summer and time for casual dining outdoors. Nothing can be better than a juicy pork sandwich with a bottle of our 2005 Money Road Ranch Merlot served at cellar temperature.

The key is slow roasted pork and I prefer the shoulder. You can either slow smoke it on an outdoor smoker if you are so inclined, or my favorite way is slow cooking it in the oven. The trick is slow and long, and if you are doing a lunch event, even put it in the oven when you go to bed. There are many ways to dress the sandwich and I will include a couple of my favorites.

Pork Shoulder:

Depending on the number of people you can get a whole one or any butcher will cut it to the size required. Trim off the excess fat. Season it with your favorite dry rub. Mine is the "Toasted Spice Rub" from Napa Style from one of my favorite chefs and star of the Food Network, Michael Chiarello. Caramelize some onions and place in roasting pan with seasoned pork shoulder on top of the onions and squeeze a fresh orange on top of the meat. Cook for 6-8 hours at 250 degrees until the meat pulls off easily.

Juicy Sandwich #1: Use a sandwich bun and add a generous portion of pulled pork, some fresh caramelized onions and cherry or fig preserves.

Juicy Sandwich #2: Use the crisp French bread and take out the excess dough in the middle to mostly crust. Spread mayo on the bottom and ripe avocado on the top followed by a generous serving of pork with some sliced fresh red onion.

Summer Lamb

You can't beat lamb and red wine. Summer is BBQ season and one of my favorite ways to prepare lamb is a boneless marinated leg cooked over a wood fire. This is how I do it; feel free to use your imagination. The primary 3 ingredients are a good quality baby lamb (I prefer American), red wine, and preferably wood or high quality charcoal fire. You can do it however on a gas grill, or under the broiler.

A small baby lamb leg, bone removed
Garlic cloves 3 or 4

Fresh rosemary and/or thyme

Salt

Pepper

Olive oil

½ bottle good red wine

Crush garlic and mix all the other ingredients together in a pan or bowl and marinate the lamb overnight in the refrigerator. Two hours before cooking, take the lamb out of the marinade and dry with paper towels and sprinkle with salt. Put the leftover marinade in a saucepan. Cook the lamb over the fire, but be careful not to burn. Over a good fire it usually comes to temperature in 30 to 40 minutes. I recommend removing the lamb when internal temperature is 140 degrees, but if you like it better done try 150. I don't recommend overcooking. Let the meat rest and cook down the leftover marinade until it thickens. Add salt and pepper to your taste. You can also thicken with a little butter mixed with flour into a paste. Slice the lamb across the grain and serve with some of the sauce. Of course wash it down with a couple of bottles of Gargiulo Merlot. Serve with your favorite veggies. I like fresh peas, and grilled eggplant.