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The South's Best Butt

Southern Living

Chopped, pulled, shredded, or sliced, there's nothing like a pork sandwich from the pit. And everyone's got an opinion on which one is boss hog. One thing's for sure: These 20 barbecue joints do it right. See if your favorite made the list, and get exclusive 'cue-pons, here

| Article: *Hanna Raskin*, Produced by: *Jennifer V. Cole*



The *Southern Living* Pulled Pork Sandwich

The Bar-B-Q Shop

Memphis, Tennessee

It's not hard to find an expertly smoked pork shoulder in Memphis, but this sandwich has won accolades for its accoutrements, including a mustard-tinged sauce, a fiery hot sauce, and sturdy Texas toast.

dancingpigs.com

A&R Bar-B-Que

Memphis, Tennessee

A&R serves tamales, bologna, and barbecue spaghetti, but the star is the sloppy chopped-pork sandwich, twitching with tangy slaw and bathed in a sauce that doesn't obscure the robust smokiness of the meat.

aandrbbq.com

Get the 'Cue-pon: Bring the June issue of *Southern Living*, and get a free side with the purchase of a large pork sandwich.

Allen & Son BBQ

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

If a foreigner was studying for a barbecue exam, the Allen & Son flash card would surely get a workout. Keith Allen's restaurant straddles the dividing line between western and eastern Carolina 'cue, and idiosyncratically borrows from both traditions. They use a thin, vinegar-based sauce, the same as Eastern pitmasters, but cook only shoulders, considered the Piedmont's domain. 919/942-7576

BRANDING + COMMUNICATIONS

GREEN OLIVE

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Reader's Picks: You voted on Facebook (and were pretty nice to each other).

Here, your top pork sandwiches:

- 1. Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q**, Birmingham, AL; jimnicks.com
- 2. Southern Soul Barbecue**, St. Simons Island, GA; southernsoulbbq.com
- 3. Memphis Barbecue Co.**, Horn Lake, MS; memphisbbqco.com
- 4. Fox Bros. Bar-B-Q**, Atlanta, GA; foxbrosbbq.com
- 5. Martin's Bar-B-Que**, Nolensville, TN; martinsbbqjoint.com
- 6. The Shed Barbeque & Blues Joint**, Ocean Springs, MS; theshedbbq.com
- 7. The Skylight Inn**, Ayden, NC; 252/746-4113
- 8. Home Team BBQ**, Charleston, SC; hometeambbq.com
- 9. Papa Buck's BBQ**, Metter, GA; papabucks.com
- 10. Moe's Original Bar B Que**, Huntsville, AL; moesoriginalbbq.com > [more](#)

BBQ Barn

North Augusta, South Carolina

South Carolina is the only state with four distinct sauce regions, and BBQ Barn offers them all, including the thick mustard variety rarely found beyond Palmetto State borders. 803/278-7202

Get the 'Cue-pon: Mention *Southern Living*, and get a free dessert with the purchase of a drink and a large plate. (Limit one per table.) Valid only through the month of June.

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q

Mason, Tennessee

Bozo's had a bit part in *Walk the Line*, the 2005 Johnny Cash biopic, but the western Tennessee restaurant has long been famed for its treatment of pork shoulders, which emerge moist and tender from the pit, bearing the faintest trace of smoke. 901/294-3400

Get the 'Cue-pon: Mention *Southern Living*, and get a free small drink with the purchase of a sandwich or plate.

The Brick Pit

Mobile, Alabama

On its website, The Brick Pit features testimonials from a car dealer, a banker, and a bonsai artist. But it doesn't take a professional palate to appreciate their succulent pulled pork, slathered with a thick tomato sauce.

brickpit.com

Get the 'Cue-pon: Bring the June issue of *Southern Living*, and receive a free sweet or unsweetened tea with the purchase of a pork sandwich.



Georgia Pig Bar-B-Que

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Wayne Anderson chops oak-smoked meat and crunchy bits of bark before saucing with his tangy original sauce. 954/587-4420

Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q

Multiple locations across the South

A multiunit chain might provoke skepticism from purists, but Jim 'N Nick's produces a phenomenal pork shoulder with traditional methods many have written off as too time-consuming. Committed to freshness and sustainability, the restaurant just launched its own heritage pork-raising program, and none of the 28 locations even has a freezer. jimnicks.com

Get the 'Cue-pon: Bring the June issue of *Southern Living*, and get a free drink with the purchase of a sandwich or plate.

Jimmy's BBQ

Lexington, North Carolina

A prickly, red slaw tops the pork shoulder at Jimmy's, a Lexington mainstay that specializes in chewy, hickory-scented meat. 336/357-2311

Get the 'Cue-pon: Bring the June issue of *Southern Living*, and get a free drink with the purchase of a pork sandwich.

Leigh's Barbecue

Kevil, Kentucky

There aren't any pretensions at Leigh's, where the terrific hickory-kissed pork shoulder is chopped to order and sauced with vinegar. 270/488-3434

Get the 'Cue-pon: Bring the June issue of *Southern Living*, and get a free drink with the purchase of a pork sandwich and a side.

Bunn's Barbecue

Windsor, North Carolina

Sandwiched between two flaps of crisp cornbread, Bunn's minced Boston butt is so good it may explain why the Russell family rebuilds every time the coastal restaurant suffers a hurricane-inflicted flood. 252/794-

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Lexington Barbecue

Lexington, North Carolina

The defining Piedmont barbecue joint—known locally as The Monk's Place—chops its shoulders and slaw into an extraordinary mixture of sweetness and smoke. 336/249-9814

Martin's Bar-B-Que Joint

Nolensville, Tennessee

Patrick Martin's open-faced sandwich, what he calls a Redneck Taco, piles hickory-smoked pork, slaw, and Piedmont-style tomato sauce atop a plate-size hoecake. martinsbbqjoint.com

Get the 'Cue-pon: Bring the June issue of *Southern Living*, and get a "throwback soda" (like bottled RC Cola, Sundrop, or Cheerwine) with the purchase of a pork entree.

Neely's

Marshall, Texas

Marooned in beef territory, Neely's is known by locals as The Brown Pig. The 85-year-old restaurant crowns ground smoked shoulder with mayonnaise, lettuce, and the signature sauce on a hamburger bun. 903/935-9040

Papa Kayjoe's

Centerville, Tennessee

The flat disks of combread that book-end Papa Kayjoe's pork sandwich are fried to order in lard, in keeping with pitmaster Devin Pickard's philosophy that barbecue ought to be a celebration of swine fat. "I know when folks think of grease they think of unhealthy," he famously told a Southern Foodways Alliance oral historian in 2008. "But the key to good barbecue is grease." 931/729-2131

Get the 'Cue-pon: Mention *Southern Living*, and get a free drink with the purchase of a pork sandwich. (Limit one per customer.)

Payne's Bar-B-Q

Memphis, Tennessee

Arguments rage over the best barbecue in Memphis, but the field narrows when you talk sandwiches. At Payne's, where lunch is so popular it's punctuated by the nonstop slap of a cleaver on the chopping block, the pork sandwich is graced with smoke-tinged bark, a robe of tomato-based sauce, and mustard slaw yellow as a buttercup. 901/272-1523

Get the 'Cue-pon: Bring the June issue of *Southern Living*, and get one free drink, side of beans, or side of chips with the purchase of a pork sandwich.



Pecan Lodge

Dallas, Texas

In a state known for barbecue, Dallas is rarely a player. But Pecan Lodge has reset 'cue expectations with killer pulled pork developed to satisfy the owners' Carolina nostalgia. pecanlodge.com

Get the 'Cue-pon: Bring in the June issue of *Southern Living*, and get a free signature Tumbleweed cookie with the purchase of a pork sandwich.

Red Bridges Barbecue Lodge

Shelby, North Carolina

Longtime customers know to request their sandwiches with "outside brown," the dark, chewy bark that lends textural zing and a woody demeanor to chopped meat. bridgesbbq.com

Get the 'Cue-pon: Mention *Southern Living*, and get a Red Bridges Barbecue song on CD and BBQ sticker.

Saucy's Walk-up Bar.B.Q.

Petersburg, Virginia

The reclaimed shipping container that houses Saucy's may be the ultimate 21st-century symbol. But the meat served from within is smoked according to long-standing low-and-slow traditions, then swabbed with sauces such as mustard-jalapeño. saucysbbq.com

Get the 'Cue-pon: Mention *Southern Living*, and get a free side with the purchase of a pork sandwich.

Sims Bar-B-Que

Little Rock, Arkansas

In 1937, Allen Sims and his wife, Amelia, opened a cafe, and quickly became known for great barbecue and their tangy, brown Sims Sauce, which they apply to every serving of chopped pork. simsbarbeque-ar.com

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