

How to Cook a "Mini Ham" by Cleo Coyle

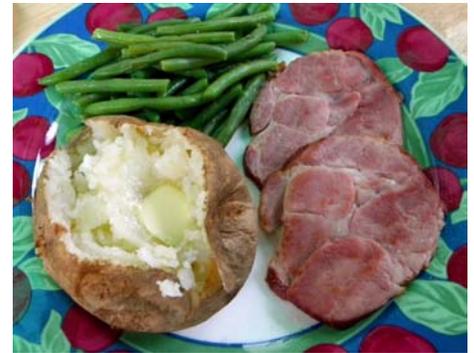
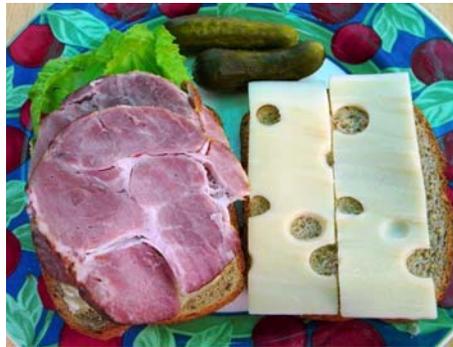
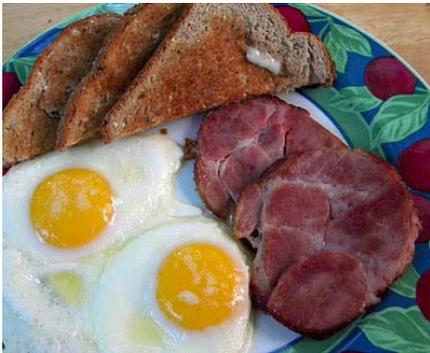
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These adorable little hams are great for your budget as well as your taste buds. They are actually smoked pork shoulder butts of about 2 to 3 pounds in size. The Freirich company sells them under the name *Porkette*. Look for them where your grocer sells hams and pork products. To find out which grocery store chain carries them in your area, visit the Freirich folks at this web address: http://www.freirich.com/where_to_buy/index.cfm



If you live in a state where Freirich is not sold, look for Daisy Rose smoked boneless pork shoulder. To learn more about that Rose Packing Company brand, visit them at this web address: http://www.rosepacking.com/fs_porkshoulder.html

Serving ideas for breakfast, lunch, and dinner...



How to Prepare

Step 1 - Remove Netting: Some boneless pork butts are held together by a fine cloth net. To remove the netting, simply soak the meat in warm (*not hot*) water for 5 to 10 minutes. (*This will dissolve the fats holding the cloth to the meat.*) Begin to work at the edge of the net with your fingers. It should come loose immediately. If not, soak a bit longer. Remove all of the netting before cooking.



Step 2 - Prep for Oven:

Preheat oven to 325° F. Place pork in the middle of a shallow pan. Pour liquid into the bottom. I use *half milk and half water*. The milk adds a lovely sweetness to the salty, smoky flavor of the ham. Liquid should be about 1-inch deep.



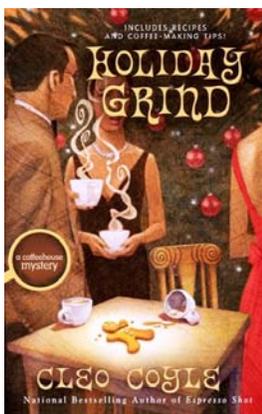
Step 3 - Roast That Butt:

Place pan in center of preheated oven for about 35 minutes per pound. *(If roasting more than one butt at the same time, add an additional 15 to 20 minutes to the total cooking time.)*

When is it done? You're looking for the meat to reach an internal temperature of 160° F, but try to avoid sticking the meat too many times with the thermometer. You don't want to lose the meat's juices. If you're using my idea of water and milk as the liquid, there's a handy visual clue that lets you know the meat is done. Near the end of the cooking process, most of the liquid will be dried up and the milk will have formed a thick film at the bottom of the pan *(like the skin you might see form on a pudding)*. The appearance of this salty skin signals the meat is thoroughly cooked.



Step 4 - Rest, Baby, Rest: After the butt is done, remove from oven and let stand under a loose tent of aluminum foil for 30 minutes before slicing. This will allow the juices to recollect and ensure the meat will be moist and not dry.



Eat with joy!
~ Cleo Coyle

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