



## Fun Facts About Today's Menu

### WHAT ARE “OAK CLIFF” OXTAILS?

First and foremost oxtails are not from an ox. Well at least not today's oxtails. For all intents and purposes oxtails refer to the tail of a steer. Any oxtails you buy retail will be beef. The tail has a long bone that is surrounded by highly gelatinous meat making it very flavorful and desirable.

For those unfamiliar, oxtails aren't actually the tail from an ox, but are the tails from cows cut into pieces. Each piece has a thick cylindrical bone with chunks of tough, fatty meat. If cooked the right way they are as delicious as beef short ribs. They are perfect for slow cooked braising and stews as the process basically renders them butter like tender.

Oxtails are often used for making stock. But around the world they are eaten as main entrees and stews from China and Korea to Jamaica and the USA. Oxtails for a long time have been a staple in soul food cooking. My Mother/Aunt would make big pots of them on Sundays and we'd have many family members and guests pop over and enjoy individual bowls full with cornbread and hot sauce. As a kid, I ate them and enjoyed them thoroughly, but they were always like the crawfish tails of beef; you worked hard for so little return. Now don't get me wrong, they were/are crazy delicious, but there just ain't a lot of meat if you get the smaller ends. Back then it didn't matter, cause at about a buck per pound or less you could buy lots of the stuff.

Knobby and fatty are two words that describe oxtails perfectly. Admittedly, that sounds anything but sexy, so if I stopped there with that as my description I'd understand why you wouldn't be interested in the least. And I'm sure the name “oxtails” doesn't help either. So let me just ask that you take a leap of faith and get past the name. It's just beef. Oh, but it's the tail you're thinking too – yeah I need you to get over that too. There's beautiful meat lurking here, like short ribs but even silky smoother. Well those knobs of bone marrow and all that fattiness make for super tender, smooth like butter braised chunks of beef. These oxtails will have a Caribbean inspired braising liquid that is rich and smoky. **P.S. OXTAILS ARE EXPENSIVE NOW DUE TO POPULARITY!!!!**

## "MAKE YOU SLAP SOMEBODY" HOMEMADE MAC AND CHEESE

There are definitely a few recipes that are quintessential to a Southerner's Sunday menu, and a southern baked macaroni and cheese recipe is one of them. I haven't tried several varieties of mac and cheese beyond my mom's. Let's just say I feel she and my Aunt makes a mean one, and I have definitely gotten used to splurging my carbohydrate calories on a big portion during a Sunday or holiday meal (especially Thanksgiving and Christmas).

There are several variations of Macaroni and Cheese recipes in books and online, however you will see varying differences when it comes to ingredients and preparation and cooking technique.

Most people are familiar with the mac and cheese that is creamy, orange in color and cooked on the stove top. What makes Soul Food Mac and Cheese different is the variety of cheese which all have different textures and the fact that the recipe is baked in an oven creating a crispy and delicious topping.

This mac and cheese is made of cheeses like sharp cheddar, manchego and gruyere that really give it a lovely depth of flavor.

P.S. Never, I repeat Never use velveta cheese in a Mac N Cheese recipe. No need for fake cheese in Southern Macaroni and Cheese making. In this recipe there is a hint of spice with smoked paprika that added a great note as well. Let me know if you taste it!

## DOWN SOUTH HOMEMADE HUSH PUPPIES

If there's one thing that has stood true through my childhood and into my adulthood, it's this: I love a good ole' fish fry. I grew up spending Summer's in Bay City, Tx where we held an annual family reunion. I can still recall feeling the Summer heat while I watched the grown-ups fry up catfish and hush puppies to the tune of classic soul music. Joyous family and food-filled moments like those are the ones I remember the most about my childhood. Such a blast!

We'd always return from our Southern excursion with plenty fish (redfish, catfish, sand trout and whiting) caught while surf fishing in Matagorda, Tx. In the weeks that followed we'd continue to enjoy a weekly fish fry. While many are familiar with Fish Fry Friday's, I always host a family fish fry/ crawfish boil in the summers and I have to have my HUSH PUPPIES!!!! The texture of a Hushpuppy is crisp with a moist, tender middle. I would compare the flavor to that of buttery, salty cornbread. It's almost too good to be true!

## WHY ARE THEY CALLED HUSH PUPPIES?

The first recorded use of the word “hushpuppy” dates back to 1899! Back then, hunters and fishermen would fry up a simple corn mixture and feed it to their dogs. The mixture was often leftover from having bread-coated or battered their own food. These easy, cheap treats were known to “hush the puppies”.

## NASHVILLE HOT CHICKEN

Nashville Hot Chicken begins with fried chicken. It is the base of the recipe and needs to be fabulous on its own to hold up to the sauce.

Once the hot chicken is fried, it is then topped with a sauce created with several different spices.

For almost 70 years, hot chicken was made and sold primarily in Nashville’s Black communities. Over the last decade or so, not only has the production and sales of this recipe risen but the story of its invention has become a part of local mythology. It has now made its way to Texas and I really love the heat that this chicken puts out.....ITS DIFFERENT FROM THE CHICKEN I WAS RAISED UP ON.....ITS HOT!!!

The sauce for this Nashville Hot Chicken is what is most important! Nailing this will take this recipe to a higher level of incredible flavor. The key ingredients for my sauce are the following:

- **Cayenne Pepper** (the heat is necessary for hot chicken!)
- **Chili Powder** (more heat but provides a different flavor profile)
- **Brown Sugar** (a lovely sweet balance to the heat)
- **Garlic Powder** (everything tastes better with garlic)
- **Smoked Paprika** (I love the essence of smoke here! It really changes the flavors a bit making it a hint more nuanced)

# “BAINBRIDGE” OH SO EASY BABY BACK RIBS

## WHAT ARE BABY BACK RIBS?

Baby Back Ribs come from the top of the rib cage between the spine and the spare ribs, below the loin muscle. A rack of baby back ribs should have a minimum of eight ribs but may have as many as thirteen!

Spiced with a smoky-sweet homemade dry rub and finished with your favorite BBQ sauce, these are the Ultimate Fall off the bone BBQ Baby Back Ribs! Whether slow-roasted in the oven or grilled over hot coals, each bite is more flavorful and tender than the last. There's nothing like fall-off-the-bone ribs to start this Summer with a splash!

Today, I'm taking a break from the grill (that's another cooking show) and making these in our Saladmaster 9 qt. braiser. EASY, EASY, EASY!!! I love a classic Southern BBQ: [cornbread](#), potato salad, [corn on the cob](#), [sweet tea](#) and greatest of 'em all, Baby Back Ribs. Tender, sweet, smoky ribs coated in rich BBQ sauce is my achilles heel!

The history of BBQ ribs is as diverse as BBQ itself. The path to tender, juicy grilled ribs began in the Caribbean, traveled north by Spanish Conquistadors, moved overseas to the Americas, and then seasoned with flavors brought over by European settlers.

For many years, ribs were made using beef due to the abundance of cattle in America. In 1539, a man by the name of Hernando de Soto brought over America's first 13 pigs. In three years the flock grew to over 700 pigs, both domestic and wild! Since then, both pork and beef ribs have been a quintessential American food. Wait until you try these!!

## LETS GET TO COOKING!!!!!!!

# Nashville Hot Chicken

Prep Time 30 minutes

Cook Time 30 minutes

Total Time 1 hour

Servings 10 pieces

## Ingredients

### For the Fried Chicken

- 2 cups buttermilk
- 1/3 cup hot sauce
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons seasoned salt
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 2 teaspoons black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 10 pieces chicken
- Vegetable oil for frying

### For the Nashville Hot Mixture

- 1/3 cup cayenne pepper
- 1 1/2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- White bread and sliced pickles for serving

## Instructions

### For the Fried Chicken

1. In a medium sized bowl, whisk together buttermilk and hot sauce and set aside.
2. Next add flour, cornstarch, seasoned salt, paprika, cayenne pepper, black pepper, garlic powder and onion powder to a paper bag and shake to mix well.

3. Dip each piece of chicken into seasoned flour and then into buttermilk then back into seasoned flour thoroughly coating each piece. Then add each piece to baking sheet to rest.
4. Finish coating all chicken and let sit for 15-20 minutes until coating has set.
5. While coating sets, add 2 - 2 1/2 inches of oil to the 11 inch saladmaster skillet and heat over medium high heat. Also turn on oven to 275 degrees.
6. This is my test for knowing when the oil is ready: Always toss a tiny bit of flour in the oil and if it began to fry and sizzle, the oil was ready.
7. Fry four to six pieces at a time on each side. Make sure you don't overcrowd the pan.
8. After each side has turned slightly golden, put the top on the skillet to steam the inside of the chicken ensuring doneness. After a couple of minutes, remove the top and continue to fry until the crust is crispy again and completely golden brown.
9. Remove chicken from oil and place on paper towels or rack to drain. Once completely drained, place the fried chicken on a parchment paper covered baking sheet add to warmed oven while finishing the other chicken pieces.
10. Fry the remaining chicken pieces and repeat steps of draining and adding to oven.

### **For the Hot Chicken Preparation**

1. Once you are done frying all chicken and it is in the oven, whisk together 1 cup of the frying oil you already used to fry the chicken, cayenne pepper, brown sugar, chili powder, garlic powder and smoked paprika until combined.
2. Remove chicken from the oven and brush the hot mixture over all of the pieces of chicken.
3. To serve, place hot chicken over white bread and serve with pickles on toothpicks.

### **Notes**

Make sure you rest your chicken before frying it to ensure that the breading stays on it.

## **FINAL TIPS FOR MAKING NASHVILLE CHICKEN!**

### ***Double Dredge!***

- This chicken has a double dredge to ensure that the crust is insanely crunchy and crispy. It is one of the most important parts of making this recipe.

### ***Rest Your Chicken!***

- Once you have breaded your chicken, allow it to sit for a bit. This allows the breading to really stick to the chicken.
- **Prop Tip:** Stick the chicken in the refrigerator to really let the coating stick really well to the chicken.

### ***Don't Fry Fridge-Cold Chicken***

- Don't start breading your chicken straight from the fridge. Placing cold chicken in the fryer will drop the temperature of the oil and prevent the chicken from frying evenly. Let your chicken sit out at room temperature for about 30 minutes. Then you're ready to go!

### ***Use Oil with A High Smoke Point***

- Using oil with a low smoke point will ultimately result in burnt chicken and the annoying sound of smoke alarms going off all over the house. Go for a neutral-tasting oil with a high smoke point, like canola, vegetable or peanut oil. Be sure to use a thermometer to maintain the temperature of the oil, 350 degrees is perfect.

### ***Make Sure Your Oil Is Ready!***

# “Bainbridge” Oh So Easy Ribs



Prep Time 15 minutes  
Cook Time 60 minutes  
Total Time 75 minutes  
Servings 6 servings

## Ingredients

- 1 slab ribs (remove membrane)
- Good all purpose rub (the key to good tasting ribs)
- BBQ sauce (use your favorite sauce)

## Instructions

1. Season the ribs generously and let sit for about 15 minutes
2. Place ribs in either the EOC, the 11 inch skillet or the 9 qt braiser
3. Next cover the ribs with your favorite bbq sauce
4. Place lid on skillet and set temperature to 300 degrees on the EOC, medium high on the 11 in skillet or the 9 qt. braiser
5. When the valve clicks, reduce heat to 185 degrees in the EOC or medium on the 11 in skillet or the 9 qt braiser and cook for 2 hours until tender.



## Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon [olive oil](#)
- 3 1/2 pounds oxtails
- 1 medium onion, chopped (cone 2)
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped (cone 1)
- 4 carrots cut diagonally into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 14-to-16-ounce can diced [tomatoes](#)
- 3/4 cup chicken broth
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground [ginger](#)
- 3/4 teaspoon [salt](#)
- 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper, cayenne
- 1/8 teaspoon ground [allspice](#)

## Steps to Make It

1. Gather all the ingredients.
2. Lightly season oxtails with your favorite seasoning and let sit to room temperature.
3. Heat the EOC to High (450 degrees) add the TBSP of olive oil to promote browning. Brown the oxtails in batches, for 5 minutes per side. So I rotate the oxtails to get a good sear all the way around. Using a slotted spoon, transfer oxtails to a bowl once they've browned.
4. Reduce heat to medium high (350 degrees) Add the onions and garlic to the pan and cook until tender, or about 7 minutes.
5. Stir in the carrots and the tomatoes with their juice.
6. Add the broth, ginger, salt, ground red pepper, and allspice. Bring to a boil.
7. Stir in the browned oxtails, and reduce heat to (about 300 degrees)
8. Cover the EOC and bake until the meat is tender, about 1.5 hours.
9. With a slotted spoon, transfer oxtails to a warm platter. Skim and discard fat from the liquid. Pour juice with carrots and tomatoes over meat and serve. Enjoy!

# “Make you slap somebody” Southern Macaroni and Cheese

Prep Time 15 minutes

Cook Time 40 minutes

Total Time 55 minutes

Servings 12 servings

## Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter divided
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground mustard
- 2 teaspoons all-purpose flour
- 3 1/2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese about 1 pound
- 1 cup shredded manchego cheese about 1/4 pound
- 1 cup shredded Gruyere cheese about 1/4 pound
- 8 cups water
- 1 1/2 teaspoons coarse salt
- 1 pound elbow macaroni
- 2 large eggs beaten
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350. Prepare a 9x13-inch baking dish with 2 tablespoons butter.
2. Using a rather large saladmaster roaster, whisk in cream, half-and-half and 4 tablespoons butter over medium-low heat. Add black pepper, red pepper flakes, nutmeg, and mustard, and whisk in flour. Cook the mixture about 2 minutes, until there are no more flour lumps. The mixture should not be bubbling. If so, reduce heat.
3. Whisk in the cheddar, manchego, and Gruyere. Keep cheese sauce on low heat until ready for the baking dish.
4. Using a 7 qt roaster, bring 8 cups of water to a boil. Sprinkle in salt. Put in the pasta and cook for about 8 minutes. The macaroni should not be mushy. Drain and transfer to prepared baking dish.

5. Mix the eggs well into the pasta. Next, pour cheese sauce over macaroni and stir well. Sprinkle paprika on top of macaroni and cheese.
6. Bake for 40 minutes, until you have a golden crust.
7. Let cool for 10 minutes before serving.

## Notes

When cooking the macaroni, please don't overcook it (al dente). It will be fully cooked as a finished dish in the oven.

This southern style baked macaroni and cheese is quite delightful and made with three cheeses:

- ***Sharp Cheddar***
- ***Manchego***
- ***Gruyere***

These really give it a lovely depth of flavor. Sharp cheddar is a conventional cheese choice and is often used in many macaroni and cheese recipes.

The other two cheeses are a little more unique. [Manchego](#) is a hard, sharp Spanish sheep's milk cheese that has a buttery nutty taste that melts well and is perfect for macaroni and cheese.

[Gruyere](#) is a sweet, yet slightly salty cheese that originates from Switzerland. As it ages, the taste of gruyere changes from creamy and nutty to more earthy and complex. This combination of cheeses gives this mac and cheese recipe a delicious and distinct taste that you'll love!

## DOWN SOUTH HOMEADE HUSH PUPPIES

Prep Time 10 minutes

Cook Time 10 minutes

Total Time 20 minutes

Servings 12 hush puppies

### Ingredients

- 3/4 cup white corn meal
- 4 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 6 tablespoons milk

### Instructions

1. In the 11 in skillet, add frying oil and heat.
2. In a medium sized bowl, add corn meal, all-purpose flour, baking powder, salt and granulated sugar and whisk together to combine. Note: **Don't Overmix. Overworking the batter will make for dense, tough hush puppies. Stir the batter only up until the dry ingredients become moist**
3. Next add in egg, onion and milk and whisk until batter is thick and well combined. Note: **Don't Overmix. Overworking the batter will make for dense, tough hush puppies. Stir the batter only up until the dry ingredients become moist**
4. Over hot heat, drop in tablespoons of batter and fry until golden brown on all sides.
5. Remove hush puppies once golden brown and drain on paper towels. Serve hot.