



Menu du Jour

11 Aug 2004

Smoked beef brisket with beer mop



Smoked Beef Brisket

Brisket, taken from the bovine's chest beneath the chuck, is one of the toughest pieces of beef on the market. It requires low and slow cooking for a long time to make it tender. With this recipe, a brisket flat is used instead of a full brisket (also called a packer's cut) which includes the point, the flat, and a thick layer of fat between the two muscles known as the deckle. A full brisket weighs about eight to 12 pounds. The flat is a leaner cut of meat. Some, however, argue the point, with its higher fat content, makes for better barbecue. Expect about a 40% loss during cooking.

This is not a quick dinner to be made after a day at work but it's a great meal to make on a weekend. Any remaining brisket may be vacuum sealed and frozen for future use. To reheat, place the sealed bag into boiling water for a few minutes. Avoid using a microwave as it will dry the meat.



1 (4- to 5-pound) choice beef brisket flat
Yellow mustard (plain ballpark variety)

For dry rub

2 tablespoons cracked black pepper
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon granulated onion
1 teaspoon dried parsley
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
2 teaspoons sweet paprika

For the mop

1/3 cup olive oil
1 small yellow onion, diced
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon dry rub (see above)
1 (12-ounce) can beer (not "lite" beer)
1/2 cup cider vinegar
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon cracked black pepper
1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper

8 – 10 pounds all-natural lump charcoal
1 cup BBQr's Delight mesquite pellets

Make dry rub:

Mix ingredients in small bowl to blend. (Makes 1/2 cup; reserve one tablespoon for mop)

Place brisket on work surface and trim fat cap to an even 1/4-inch thickness. Score fat cap into a diamond pattern. Brush brisket with yellow mustard and sprinkle dry rub evenly all over brisket. Cover with food film and refrigerate at least two hours. (Can be prepared one day ahead and held in refrigerator.)

Make mop:

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, sauté onions and garlic in olive oil until wilted. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a simmer. Cook for five minutes. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. (Don't apply a cold mop to warm meat.) (Makes 2 1/2 cups)



About 45 minutes before cooking, fill Grill Dome firebox 3/4 full with lump charcoal and ignite with pieces of a SuperCedar fire starter or electric igniter. Add three chunks of hickory wood and, using a foil pouch or cast iron smoker pot, 1/3 cup of the mesquite pellets. When the temperature of the Grill Dome stabilizes at 225° F. (about 30 to 45 minutes after lighting), place brisket on cooking grate over a drip pan. Close the lid and smoke brisket for three hours adjusting the dampers to maintain a cooking temperature of 225° F. (For my Grill Dome ET, this means having the bottom damper open about 1/4 to 1/2 of an inch and the top damper open about 10%.) Add more pellets and wood chunks, as needed, to maintain desired smoke level.

Mop brisket and continuing cooking, mopping every hour, until brisket reaches an internal temperature of 170° F. (About five to 5 1/2 hours into the cook.) Double wrap the brisket in heavy duty aluminum foil, add about 1/2 cup of mop, and continue cooking until the brisket reaches an internal temperature of 190° F., about another 60 to 90 minutes. (Total cooking time will vary depending on the heat of the smoker and the size of the brisket. At 225° F., plan on about 1 1/2 to two hours per pound.)

When brisket is cooked, remove from smoker, unwrap, and let rest for ten minutes. Thinly slice across the grain and plate. Serve with finishing sauce, grilled sweet corn on the cob and cole slaw.

Yield: Six six-ounce servings

Chef's Note: A 4.2-pound brisket flat, after cooking, yielded 2 1/2 pounds of sliced meat.



Brisket Finishing Sauce

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 medium onion, minced
4 medium garlic cloves, minced
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup cider vinegar
3 tablespoons coarse-grain mustard
1 teaspoon celery seed
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon cracked black pepper
1/2 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
1 cup ketchup

Heat oil in 2 1/2-quart saucepan over medium heat; add onion and garlic, cook until softened, about five minutes. Stir in all the remaining ingredients except ketchup and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low and add the ketchup. Cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 10 minutes. Using an immersion blender or food processor, process sauce until smooth. Serve warm.

(Makes two cups of sauce)



Brisket coated with mustard



Brisket coated with mustard and rub



Onto the Grill Dome



About six hours later... finished

From The Kitchen Of Michael H. Stines
www.CapeCodBBQ.com



Finished Brisket