



Conclave 2025 | Branson MO

## NEWSLETTER #2

### **ALL ABOUT BBQ**

*As you may recall, enjoying the Regional Foods of the southeast is one of our three main goals on this Tour (the other two being driving great roads and socializing with friends old and new).*

*To that end, I thought you might enjoy a little “background” on one of the Southern staples we’ll enjoy on our trip. You will have the chance to experience all five types of BBQ along the way. Caution: Don’t read this article if you are hungry! ....Steve*

Southern BBQ has a rich and diverse history that varies significantly across different regions, each with its own distinct styles and flavors. Here’s a brief overview highlighting the variations found in North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri:

**North Carolina BBQ:** North Carolina is renowned for its focus on pork, particularly whole hog BBQ. This tradition dates to colonial times when pigs were a common livestock animal. There are two main styles within North Carolina BBQ:

- **Eastern Style:** This style uses the whole hog, slow-cooked over hardwood coals, and then chopped or pulled. The meat is typically seasoned with a vinegar-based sauce that is tangy and often includes pepper flakes.
- **Lexington Style (Western Style):** Found in the Piedmont and western parts of the state, this style also uses pork shoulder but is typically served chopped or sliced with a sauce that combines vinegar, ketchup, and pepper, resulting in a slightly sweeter flavor compared to the Eastern style.

**Tennessee BBQ:** Tennessee BBQ, particularly Memphis BBQ, is known for its emphasis on pork ribs and pulled pork. Memphis BBQ is often characterized by its dry rubs (spice mixes applied before cooking) and sauces:

- **Memphis Style:** Ribs are a staple, either "dry" with a flavorful dry rub or "wet" with a tangy tomato-based sauce applied during and after cooking. Pulled pork sandwiches are also popular, served with a choice of sauces ranging from sweet to spicy.

**Kentucky BBQ:** Kentucky BBQ shares similarities with Tennessee styles but is known for its mutton (mature sheep meat) BBQ. The tradition of mutton BBQ in Kentucky dates to the 19th century and reflects the state's agricultural heritage:

- **Western Kentucky Style:** Mutton is slow-cooked and served with a Worcestershire-based sauce that often includes vinegar and spices. This style is unique due to the use of mutton rather than pork, giving it a stronger, more distinctive flavor.

**Kansas City BBQ:** Kansas City, located at the crossroads of barbecue traditions, is renowned for its variety and influence on American BBQ culture. It incorporates elements from various regional styles:

- **Kansas City Style:** This style is known for its emphasis on a wide range of meats, including pork ribs, beef brisket, and burnt ends (crispy ends of smoked brisket). Kansas City BBQ is characterized by its thick, sweet, and tangy tomato-based sauces, which are often applied generously both during cooking and at the table.

In summary, Southern BBQ reflects a deep-rooted culinary tradition shaped by local ingredients, cooking methods, and cultural influences. Each region's distinct style—from North Carolina's vinegar-based sauces to Kansas City's sweet and tangy blends—highlights the diversity and creativity within American barbecue culture. These variations continue to evolve, making Southern BBQ a cherished and dynamic part of American cuisine.

*(Editor's Note: You might be interested to know that this entire article was generated by AI on ChatGPT in less than five minutes! After asking only a few questions, the AI bot was able to understand exactly where we were travelling and customize the article accordingly. Amazing!)*