

Hog Roast Oven Cooking Instructions



Oven Preparation

The Tasty Trotter Hog Roast Oven requires little to no preparation prior to cooking.

Really the only thing to remember is to make sure you thoroughly clean the machine before its first use to ensure any manufacturing oils are removed.

This oven is capable of cooking a variety of meats in many different ways with the added extra of cooking joints at the same time using the tray system. The roasting cradle can be used to cook chickens, jacket potatoes or joints of any kind.

Please note that we recommend always carrying a screwdriver and spanner with you to ensure that you can tighten any bolts or screws that have come loose during cooking or transportation.

Meat Preparation

Our Tasty Trotter Hog Roast Oven can cook many different types of meat, however the most popular is pork, hence the name Hog Roast. With this in mind our meat preparation guide has been written using pork as the main meat.

There are several different schools of thought on how to prepare a pig for roasting; the best advice would be to consult with your local butcher or meat supplier. The most important point is to firmly secure the pig to the spit distributing the weight as evenly as possible; ensure you fit the spit as close to the top of the rib cage as you can. Most butchers will do this for you but if not then please see our PDF guide in the D-Downloads section and our video showing how this is done by clicking on the V-Video link above. Basic rules are that the U shaped retainers will go through the middle (back of the animal) and be responsible for the majority of the meats weight. The 4 pronged retainers are used on either end on the spit shaft to secure the ends of the meat in place. Finally the triangular shaped retainers can either be used at either end of the spit to assist with lift the pig in and out of the oven, or they can be used to secure the legs in place if you are keeping them on during cooking.

You will need to decide if you are going to keep the head and feet in place; our Hog Roast Oven is big enough for the largest pig complete with head and feet in place however please bear in mind occasionally some customers don't like to see this. You may like to give your customers a choice.

To score or not to score

Scoring requires cutting into the skin about 1cm deep in several places, ensuring lines do not cross. Tasty Trotter Event Supplies do not recommend scoring, you are cooking the meat for the meat and not the crackling, the crackling, in our opinion, is an added bonus.

We believe that scoring the meat increases the risk of the meat falling off the spit and more importantly it can increase the risk of dry meat. Not scoring the meat means the juices are kept inside which we believe makes for far more succulent and tasty meat. The only drawback with this is that the cracking may require some good, sharpe scissors to cut through it once cooked.

There is very little preparation required for the meat but best results can be obtained by sprinkling the skin with salt and rubbing it in. If you decide to score then it is important that the score lines are not linked and cannot form islands of skin that can fall off. Use short score lines of around 5cm long and NOT criss-crossing other lines.

Optional Roasting Cradle

With the optional spit roast cradle you can cook chickens, small joints of meat, turkey joints, jacket potatoes and roasted vegetables. Our roasting cradle will hold approximately 24 chickens or 150 potatoes. The oven has been designed so that meat can be cooked on the spit whilst the stainless steel trays are in place. This allows you to cook dauphinoise potatoes, roasted vegetables or heat stuffing on these trays whilst the meat is cooking. Use at least one of the trays to carve your meat into, as this makes serving easier.

If you are using the Roasting Cradle to cook joints of meat then we suggest you ask the butchers to prepare thin and wide joints as these tend to fit better in the baskets. For joints, chickens and jacket potatoes you simply balance the items in the baskets distributing the weight as evenly as possible. We recommend that you watch the Roasting Cradle rotate a few times before closing the lid to ensure nothing is going to catch or fall.

Cooking Guidelines

There are many different opinions on methods of cooking meat in spit roast machines, scoring or not, seasoning, temperatures etc. all of these are down to personal preference and with time of you using your machine you will inevitably have your own methods to share. This being said below is a brief hot to guide of the basics.

Cooking times will depend on the weight of the meat and some varying factors (outdoors temperature etc.) If possible the meat will always cook better and quicker if it is has been brought up to room temperature. It is likely to have been refrigerated at around 3°C so it will ideally need around 2-5 hours or so to get to room temperature prior to cooking.

There is no need to preheat the oven prior top cooking which allows you to fully ensure the meat is in place and secure once placed inside the oven.

For filled bread rolls with stuffing & pork, you will need to allow approximately 160g to 225g per person; 175g per person is usually adequate for most calculations as this is equivalent to a normal average appetite.

We recommend that for the first 45mins or so of cooking you put both burners on full to cook the meat at around 250°C, this should sear the meat and result in a less visible loss of juices. Meat fibers contract when heat is applied, squeezing out juices from the inside, with a high heat applied first these juices will be burnt into a crust on the outside of the meat; sealing it and retaining more of the juices on the inside resulting in more succulent and tasty meat.

Following this, reduce the oven temperature to around 200°C for the remaining cooking time, slower and lower heat cooking results in better meat flavor. One burner should be adequate to provide enough heat to achieve this temperature. A generally rule of thumb for pork is one hour of cooking for every 10 kilo of meat. This time will need to be increased if you want to serve pulled (shredded) style pork.

For lamb the cooking time is reduced. The way lamb is severed is down to personal preference as it can be served pink so it requires less cooking time.

Test the meat is fully cooked with a suitable temperature gauge and visually check the juices are running clear.

NOTE Pork must reach 75°C to be classed as safe (78°C in Scotland) so test meat is fully cooked with a suitable temperature gauge and visibly check the juices are running clear.

PLEASE do not solely trust the temperature gauge on the oven. Due to its position it takes some time for the true temperature to soak through to this gauge.

IMPORTANT

Only cook in a well-ventilated area, ensure that no combustible materials are within 1 metre of the oven, ensure vents are not obscured in any way and that the oven isn't in a windy location. Do not leave unattended and check that the burner(s) are lit and the spit is rotating on a regular basis.

Useful Tips

A 60 kilos pig will feed 150-180 people, but you can add extra joints to the spit and in the trays to take your total cooking meat to over 100 kilos, that's enough to feed 350 people in one sitting.

The oven uses less than 1 kilos of gas per hour so you can cook a full pig for around £15 in gas costs. We use 13 kilo bottles (orange propane bottles) which will do for two events.

Make sure you save every bit of juice and fat, the oven has a drain hole in the bottom and is supplied with a jug - catch all these juices as they will all be used. The liquids that land into the jug will separate, the top fat or dripping can be used for cooking vegetables in the top trays whilst we use the juice and a bit of the fat for putting in the top trays during the carving process - this makes the meat extra moist and juicy. Adding a bit of salt into the juice also helps to bring out the flavour.

If your customers are eating at a set meal time then there is nothing better than cooking a full pig (head off) and if you are serving over a few hours then using a bain-marie is a really good addition to your equipment. If you are selling at a car boot, festival or all day events then we suggest using our Roasting Cradle as this allows you to cook joints and stagger them in and out of the oven.

I.e. put 4 joints in, wait 30 mins, then add another 4, wait 30 mins then add another 4 etc., the oven will hold around 16 x 3-5 kilo joints. The idea is to add raw ones in columns to the right ensuring the most cooked are always on the left, once you have removed 4 cooked joints, move everything to the left allowing space for more raw joints on the right.

Joints will take around 1hr 45mins for a loin joint to 3 hours for a shoulder/leg joint assuming a warm oven and room temperature meat.

With this method you can add and take off meat according to how many people turn up on the day which results in less wastage as you can always save what you don't use for your next event.

If you want to feed say 50-100 people with our full size Hog Roast Oven, try and avoid a suckling pig, they tend to be very expensive and don't have enough fat on them to make for a juicy cook.

It's much better to use a standard pig of around 50-60kilos then remove the shoulders and cook what is called a 'dressed hind', you can freeze the shoulders and use them for another event.

When carving it's much better to start at one end and turn the pig around i.e. carve in columns rather than one side, that way if you finish early, you will be left with untouched parts that you can re heat and use at a later date. NOTE ensure reheated meat reaches a temperature of 65°C before serving. Don't keep cooked meat in a refrigerator for more than a few days before using unless you freeze it first.

The secret to good crackling is dry skin, this can be difficult to achieve with a freshly killed pig or in damp conditions but rubbing salt into the skin will help dry it out. We have heard of many other techniques to achieve good crackling, the most common of which is to cook the pig long and at low heat for over 6 hours then boost it by turning both burners on full for the last 30 mins to 'foam' the crackling. Each chef tends to have their own techniques.

Lamb Guide by Richard Hickson @ Hickson Quality Foods Ltd.

The spring lamb was about 23kg

It took 2 1/4 hour we started it off hot for 15 minutes then turned it down low for the rest.

We cut the lamb and put garlic and rosemary in it then put a marinade on it called Greek passion. It was very nice

It was served just pink in the legs

The taste of the lamb was amazing very juicy. I would do it again

