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CIR's Corner

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Hello everyone! "CIR's Corner" is my monthly article about international exchange and cultures around the world. I will introduce a variety of interesting international topics.

This Month's Topic: Barbecue

Many people cook meat outdoors in Japan during the summer, and Americans are no different. The United States, especially the South, has a rich barbecue culture, and each state has its own traditions. For example, in my home state of Washington, we call grilling hamburgers and hot dogs outdoors a barbecue. However, in the South, barbecue has a stricter definition; only meats that are cooked "low and slow" over wood smoke are recognized as authentic barbecue.

This month, I'm going to introduce some of the main regional varieties of barbecue. Which one sounds the most delicious to you?

Texas Style



Texas-style barbecue is mainly beef. In Texas, they season their briskets with just salt and pepper, and smoke them at a low temperature for many hours. A dark, crisp bark forms on the outside, while the inside becomes melt-in-your-mouth tender. Since the seasoning is so simple, you can enjoy the

true flavor of the meat. The sauce is tomato based and always served on the side so that each diner can use as much as they like.

Kansas City Style



Unlike Texas-style barbecue, Kansas City-style is famous for its sauce. The quintessential BBQ sauce known all over the world was born in Kansas City. This thick, sweet and sour sauce made from tomatoes and molasses is used liberally on all kinds of meat, from pork to beef, chicken and even turkey.

Memphis Style



Memphis-style barbecue is mostly pork, particularly ribs and pork shoulder. There are two kinds of ribs: "wet" ribs, which are served with sauce,

and “dry” ribs, which are served without. Before smoking, all ribs are coated with a flavorful “dry rub” that contains salt, pepper, brown sugar, paprika, onion powder, garlic powder, chili powder, and various other spices. People who want to enjoy the flavor of the rub on its own order their ribs “dry.”

North Carolina Style



The state of North Carolina has two kinds of barbecue: Eastern style, which is popular in the east, and Lexington style, which is popular in Lexington and the western part of the state. Eastern style is famous for “whole hog” barbecue, while Lexington style primarily uses the pork shoulder. Both styles are known for their pulled pork sandwiches, and both styles use a vinegar-based sauce. However, in Eastern-style barbecue, the sauce contains only vinegar, brown sugar, pepper, and red pepper flakes; no tomatoes. In addition, they chop their pulled pork so that the thin sauce can be absorbed more thoroughly. In Lexington-style barbecue, they add some ketchup to their sauce.

South Carolina Style



Like its neighbor North Carolina, South Carolina-style barbecue favors pork. Also, vinegar-based sauces have spread to parts of the

state that border North Carolina. One sauce that is unique to central South Carolina is “Carolina Gold.” It contains American yellow mustard, honey, brown sugar, vinegar, and a variety of spices. Its tangy flavor perfectly cuts through the richness of the pork.

Alabama Style



Alabama-style barbecue is not as well-known as Texas-style, Kansas City-style, Memphis-style, or Carolina-style barbecue, but it has some distinctive characteristics. In addition to the standard pork, chicken is particularly popular. In northern Alabama, they slather their barbecue chicken with “white sauce.” It contains mayonnaise, vinegar, brown sugar, horseradish, and spices.

Hawaii Style



The South is not the only place famous for barbecue. Hawaii is known for its traditional “Kalua Pig.” A whole pig is wrapped in banana leaves and slow-cooked in an *imu*, a traditional Hawaiian earthen oven. It is seasoned with only salt, but the earthen oven's heat and smoke, along with the banana leaves, impart a delicious flavor. Authentic Kalua Pig is difficult to prepare, so it's usually only eaten on special occasions such as weddings and graduation parties. Tourists can try it at a luau.

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