KOREAN CUISINE

Moksalgui

Grilled Pork Neck | 목살구이



A pillar of authentic Korean barbecue (K-BBQ) alongside pork belly, featuring thick-cut pork neck or shoulder butt (*moksal*). Prized for its rich marbling of lean meat and fine veins of savory fat, it delivers a tender, juicy bite without excessive greasiness. Simply seasoned with coarse sea salt and freshly cracked black pepper, seared over high heat on an iron grill pan or charcoal until deeply browned, and enjoyed wrapped in crisp leafy greens with a savory fermented soybean paste sauce (*doenjang* / *ssamjang*).

⏱️ **Prep: 10 mins | Cook: 10–12 mins |** 🍳 **Easy |** 🥩 **Juicy & Leaner K-BBQ |** ♨️ **High Protein**

Ingredients (2-3 servings)

- **Main Ingredients:** 450–500g pork neck/shoulder steaks (*moksal*, cut 1.5–2 cm thick), 1/2 tsp coarse sea salt (or roasted salt), 1/4 tsp freshly cracked black pepper
- **Grilling Vegetables:** 1 king oyster mushroom (sliced lengthwise), 1/2 yellow onion (cut into thick rings), 6–8 whole garlic cloves
- **Savory Doenjang Sauce (*Ssamjang*):** 2 tbsp Korean soybean paste (*doenjang*), 1 tbsp gochujang (chili paste), 1 tbsp minced garlic, 1 tbsp toasted sesame oil, 1 tbsp honey or rice syrup, 1 stalk finely chopped scallion, 1 tsp toasted sesame seeds
- **Table Wraps & Fresh Vegetables (*Ssam*):** Red leaf lettuce, perilla leaves (*kkaet-nip*), fresh green chili peppers (*ojigoe-gochu* or Cheongyang chilies), sliced cucumber

Allergy Information

- **Contains:** Pork, Soy (*Doenjang*, Gochujang), Wheat (Gochujang), Sesame

Equipment

- Cast-Iron Grill Pan or Heavy Skillet (or Charcoal Grill), Kitchen Tongs, Kitchen Shears, Paper Towels, Small Dip Bowls

Cooking Instructions

1. **Prepping & Seasoning the Meat:** Bring the pork neck steaks to room temperature for 15–20 minutes. Pat both sides thoroughly dry with paper towels. Lightly score fine crisscross cuts across the surface, then sprinkle coarse sea salt and cracked black pepper evenly over both sides.
2. **Mixing the Doenjang Dip:** In a small bowl, whisk together *doenjang*, gochujang, minced garlic, honey, chopped scallion, sesame oil, and toasted sesame seeds until smooth and thick.

3. **High-Heat Searing:** Heat a heavy cast-iron skillet or grill pan over medium-high heat until lightly smoking. Place the seasoned pork neck steaks onto the hot surface. Sear undisturbed for 2.5–3 minutes until a rich, golden-brown crust forms on the bottom.
4. **Flipping & Adding Vegetables:** Flip the meat and sear the other side for another 2–3 minutes. Arrange sliced onions, garlic cloves, and king oyster mushrooms around the edges of the pan to sizzle in the rendered savory pork oil.
5. **Slicing & Serving:** Using sharp kitchen shears, snip the thick pork steaks into bite-sized strips (about 1.5 cm wide). Roll the pieces across the hot pan for another 1–2 minutes until fully cooked through and sizzling. Serve immediately straight from the pan with the doenjang dip, grilled vegetables, and fresh lettuce wraps.

💡 Cooking & Pairing Tips

- **Thick Cut & High Heat:** Slicing *moksal* thick (1.5–2 cm) and searing over high heat locks in internal juices (*yuk-jeop*), preventing the leaner meat fibers from drying out.
- **The Harmony of Doenjang:** The deep, earthy umami and natural probiotics of fermented soybean paste (*doenjang*) cut through the richness of pork, creating a perfectly balanced bite when wrapped together.
- **Grilled Garlic & Mushrooms:** Frying whole garlic cloves and king oyster mushrooms in the small amount of rendered pork fat caramelizes their natural sugars and infuses them with savory flavor.
- **Perfect Food & Beverage Pairing:** Complements warm white rice, soybean paste stew (*Doenjang-jjigae*), spicy green onion salad (*pa-jeori*), or cold buckwheat noodles (*Naengmyeon*). Pairs exceptionally well with chilled Korean soju or a crisp draft beer.

Storage Instructions

- Fresh raw pork should be stored tightly wrapped in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. Leftover cooked pork neck can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1–2 days and reheated in a hot skillet over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or repurposed into kimchi stew (*Kimchi-jjigae*) or fried rice.

Nutrition Facts (Estimated)

- Total Content : Approx. 500g (2-3 servings total)
- Calories : 920 kcal total (approx. 184 kcal per 100g / 307 kcal per 1 serving)
  – Sodium : 820mg (41%)
  – Total Carbohydrate : 14g (5%)
  – Sugar : 6g (6%)
  – Total Fat : 58g (107%)

– Trans Fat : 0g
– Saturated Fat : 20g (133%)
– Cholesterol : 210mg (70%)
– Protein : 84g (153%)
– Calcium : 60mg (6%)

Editor's Review

1. A Sensual Fusion of Clean Meat Juices, Subtle Pepper Fragrance, and Savory Doenjang Sauce
The moment a thick cut of pork neck—cleanly seasoned with salt and pepper and seared to golden perfection on a hot grill—hits the palate, a rich wave of clean meat juices and savory depth floods the senses. Pairing the tender, lean meat with fresh ssam vegetables and a rich, earthy doenjang-based sauce delivers an endlessly satisfying and dynamic culinary experience.

2. Culinary Mastery Forged by High-Heat Searing and Optimal Thickness Texturizing
Moksal-gui stands as a masterclass in lean pork grilling, utilizing intense heat to rapidly sear surface proteins and lock natural juices within the dense muscle fibers while employing precise thickness slicing to achieve a crisp exterior and a tender, moist interior. Managing thermal intensity to safeguard moisture and maximize clean pork flavors represents fundamental culinary science that achieves peak textural harmony.

3. Heartwarming Solace Shared Around a Sizzling Griddle
Gathered around a sizzling griddle at the end of a long day, sharing a plate of savory grilled pork neck acts as a comforting remedy for daily weariness, filling the spirit with unpretentious warmth. Savoring a hearty, wholesome bite of well-grilled meat grants an authentic sanctuary of peace and emotional recovery.

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