

HOW TO FRY HOG JOWL

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Follow step-by-step, photo illustrated instructions to fry up some good old Southern Hog Jowl. Often referred to as Pork Jowl Bacon, it's not just for New Years Day. We'll show you how easy it is to slice it for frying, or to use it as seasoning in lots of your favorite beans and greens side dishes. Printable recipe included.

Hog Jowl is typically something you might only look for in the grocery store as you plan your New Years Day menu. It's sad, but that's just the way it is. I say "sad," because it can be used all year round, but most folks don't think about it beyond the traditional New Years Day meal.

So, what exactly IS this Hog Jowl that we speak of? Well, it's Bacon. Maybe not the typical bacon you might think of, but it's still a type of bacon. And, it's just as good as what you normally consider bacon to be. The bacon you typically purchase is made from smoked and cured pork belly. Hog Jowl Bacon comes from smoked and cured cheeks of the pig. Both have sections of fat, and sections of meat. Regular bacon though, doesn't come with the rind, or skin, like Hog Jowl normally does. The Hog Jowl part, is more like fatback in that respect. But, we're getting off into another section and direction all together. Let's try to stay focused.

You can slice the Hog Jowl, as we'll show you below, and fry it just like bacon. (Because it IS bacon.) You can also use it to season up Pinto Beans, Butterbeans, Black Eye Peas, or even your Collard Greens. It's very versatile, AND it's usually much cheaper than regular bacon. That makes me smile.

Serving pork on New Years Day is a big part of our Southern tradition. Because pigs "root," or "forage" in a forward direction, this moving forward is seen as a symbol of moving forward as you begin a new year. You can read more about our Southern New Years Day meal by clicking: [HERE](#)

Personally, I prefer to use Hog Jowl over Ham Hocks when I cook up a pot of peas or beans. There's just a little difference in the taste of the smoked jowls that tickles my taste buds, so I try to keep some in the freezer year round. Normally, buying a section or two just as the year ends, and placing it in the freezer, will keep me in good supply for months to come.

So, if you're ready to keep the tradition going, Let's Get Cooking!



How To Fry Hog Jowl



Fried Hog Jowl: You'll need this, a Hog Jowl, smoked and cured.



This is the meat side of this particular piece of Hog Jowl. It's been fully smoked and cured and it's ready to be sliced and fried.

You'll find Hog Jowl in all types of shapes and forms, large pieces and small, when you go to purchase it. It just depends on how it's been cut and prepared by the butcher. You'll find thin pieces and you'll find thick pieces. Just pick out the one that suits your fancy.



This is skin side up. Most of the time, Hog Jowl will come with the rind, or skin, still attached. You can leave this on, but you'll need a good sharp knife to cut through it. I think the markings on this one is what caught my attention the most. It looks like it's straight off the grill, but it's just from where it was smoked and cured.



It looks like bacon! Once you slice into it, you'll see how much it resembles bacon. You've got a good amount of fat, and some marbled lean meat as well. You'll often find it labelled as Pork Jowl Bacon if it's been smoked and cured. The neat thing about it is, you can slice it up as thin or as thick as you like.



As mentioned, you'll need a good sharp knife to slice through the skin part. It's best to have the meat really cold, so you might want to pop it into the freezer for about 15 minutes before you try to slice it. It just make it firmer and easier to work with.

Slice off enough bacon like pieces to fry up in the skillet. I like it a little thick so these pieces are a good quarter of an inch thick or more.



When I got down to the thinner edge, I just cut it up into hunks. I'll freeze these to be used later as seasoning meat when cooking up Pinto Beans, Black Eye Peas and other dishes.



Because I still don't have that food saver to vacuum seal my foods with, I start out by wrapping each

piece in clear plastic wrap.



Then I wrap each one of those in aluminum foil. Next, I place several pieces inside a good Ziplock bag and place them in the freezer. I did this to keep that heavy, smokey aroma from getting into my ice cubes and other food items in the freezer. I can pull one of these out of the freezer when I start to soak my Black Eye Peas overnight, then it'll be thawed and ready to toss in the pot when I start cooking the peas the next day.



I warmed up the cast iron skillet and placed the sliced pieces of the Hog Jowl inside.



Cook them just below Medium heat on your stove top. You'll need to turn them as needed so they don't overcook in any one place. Rotating them around in the pan can help as well. Just keep an eye on them and don't let them cook too fast and burn. Unless you like it burned, that's your choice.



Thicker slices will not crisp up like thin slices of bacon, but it will get pretty close. Cook it up as brown as you like it. When it's done, remove it from the pan and place it on a couple of sheets of folded paper towels and let it drain a bit.

Because it's full of fat, you'll have a good amount of grease remaining in the pan. This can be saved and used just like you would with bacon grease. It will also add good flavoring to your other dishes. Don't pour it out, save it in a container inside the refrigerator.



Serve it warm and enjoy!