



Berlin's Own Barbecue Belt

From sticky ribs to pulled pork, **Hilda Hoy** feasted on some American-style barbecue, the finger-lickin'-good food trend taking Berlin by storm.

For years, the predominant American culinary import in town was the good old burger. But recently, a new delicacy has been giving the beef patty a run for its money: American barbecue, the kind eaten with passion across a wide swath of the South, from Texas to Kentucky to North Carolina, the so-called "barbecue belt."

The forerunner of the trend in Berlin was **Big Stuff Smoked BBQ** (Eisenbahnstr. 42–43, www.bigstuff.de), which opened in 2012 with a real-deal meat smoker imported all the way from Tennessee. Back then, Big Stuff was the only place in Berlin to get pork shoulder properly smoked for hours over

wood chips, or fall-apart-tender beef brisket smothered in zesty BBQ sauce. Years later, it's still as popular as ever, drawing hungry meat-lovers to the Big Stuff stand inside Kreuzberg's Markthalle Neun, where they sit on picnic tables inside the 1890s market hall to enjoy their feast.

On the other end of the city is **Pignut BBQ** (Arminiusstr. 2, www.pignut.de), a more recent arrival with a similar setup inside the Arminius market hall in Moabit. It's well worth traveling off the tourist track to sample the authentic Alabama-style BBQ – think ribs, pulled pork, and chicken, all incredibly tender and rich with the scent of proper hickory smoke. Choose from sides of

coleslaw, fries, baked beans, and pickle spears, plus a solid selection of craft beers and bourbon to wash it all down.

Last but definitely not least on Berlin's BBQ roster is Mitte's **Chicago Williams BBQ** (p. 51), the only one of the three to have its own sit-down restaurant location. The meaty menu includes some European-inspired items such as salsiccia and merguez sausages and even escargots, but regulars would advise you to come hungry and go whole-hog with one of the meat platters. You'll want to add a side of creamy mac and cheese to the pile of ribs, pork, and chicken, then finish up by licking the last tasty remnants of sauce from every finger.