

## lunch box chronicles



## Ham it up

Bake a succulent one for dinner, and use the leftovers in portable salads, sandwiches, and wraps. **By Alison Lewis**

## Slice and Dice

- Choose a firm, plump ham half that is pink and has a fine grain.
- Ham is easier to slice thinly if it's chilled first.
- If coating the ham with sugar, wait until the last 30 minutes or hour of cooking, or the sugar will burn.
- Don't throw out the ham bone. Freeze it and use later to flavor soups, stews, beans, or broth.
- Carve with a sharp knife with a long, thin blade.
- Refrigerate a purchased ham half in its original wrapping for up to one week; store leftover ham in the refrigerator for up to three days or in the freezer for up to six months.

Here's the thing about a ham: It's so generous that you'll never eat the whole thing at once, so there are always leftovers for simple sandwiches or some creative lunches. It's versatile enough to fit into many different preparations, from potato salad to pasta. It's also incredibly flavorful, an asset in any dish, contributing a pleasant saltiness and meaty richness.

Here, we offer a basic recipe for baked ham half, the most common cut offered in supermarkets. Prepare it for dinner one night, and serve with simple sides, such as steamed broccoli and mashed potatoes. Use the remaining meat in any of the following tasty dishes, all of which can be made a day ahead, transport well, and can be served cold or at room temperature. Because the seasonings on the ham are minimal, the leftovers work well with Italian, Mediterranean, German, and American flavors—all creative lunches that go beyond a typical ham sandwich.

## ◀ Simple Baked Ham

This basic recipe yields a fine ham to serve for breakfast or dinner. Because the seasonings are mild, leftovers are at home in a variety of dishes. Soaking the ham in water draws out some of the sodium so the ham won't taste too salty.

- 1 (8-pound) 33%-less-sodium smoked, fully cooked ham half
  - 2 teaspoons whole cloves
- Cooking spray
- 2 cups apple juice, divided
  - 2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
  - 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

1. Place ham in a large Dutch oven or stockpot. Cover with water to 2 inches above ham; cover and refrigerate for 24 hours. Drain; rinse well with warm water. Drain.
2. Preheat oven to 325°.
3. Trim fat and rind from ham. Score outside of ham in a diamond pattern; stud with cloves. Place ham, skin side down, on the rack of a broiler pan coated with cooking spray. Place rack in pan; pour 1 cup apple juice over ham. Cover ham loosely with foil. Bake at 325° for 2½ hours, basting occasionally with remaining 1 cup apple juice.
4. Remove ham from oven (do not turn oven off); uncover ham. Combine sugar and mustard; brush over ham. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 30 minutes or until a thermometer inserted into thickest portion registers 140°. Place ham on a cutting board; cover and let stand 10 minutes before slicing. Yield: 26 servings (serving size: about 3 ounces).

CALORIES 130 (44% from fat); FAT 6.3g (sat 2.1g, mono 3g, poly 0.7g); PROTEIN 14.6g; CARB 3.5g; FIBER 0g; CHOL 52mg; IRON 0.8mg; SODIUM 819mg; CALC 1.9mg