

Classic Baby Back Ribs

Prep Time: 30 mins **Serves** 4 to 6



INGREDIENTS

Cooking Time: 3 to 4 h

4 racks baby back ribs, each about 2 pounds

Rub

2 tablespoons kosher salt

2 tablespoons paprika

4 teaspoons granulated garlic

4 teaspoons pure ground ancho chile

2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon ground cumin

Sauce

¾ cup / 180 milliliters unsweetened apple juice

½ cup / 120 milliliters ketchup

3 tablespoons cider vinegar

2 teaspoons soy sauce

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1 teaspoon molasses (not blackstrap molasses)

½ teaspoon pure ground ancho chile

½ teaspoon granulated garlic

¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Baste

1 cup / 240 milliliters unsweetened apple juice

3 tablespoons cider vinegar

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 tablespoons barbecue sauce (from above)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 01 In a small bowl mix the rub ingredients.
- 02 Using a dull knife, slide the tip under the membrane covering the back of each rack of ribs. Lift and loosen the membrane until it breaks, then grab a corner of it with a paper towel and pull it off. Cut each rack crosswise in the middle to create two smaller racks. Season the racks all over, putting more of the rub on the meaty sides than the bone sides. Arrange the racks in a rib rack, with all the bones facing the same direction. Allow the racks to stand at room temperature for about 30 minutes.
- 03 If using wood chips, soak in water for at least 30 minutes (no need to soak wood chunks).

- 04 Place a large disposable foil pan underneath the cooking grate to catch the drippings. You may have to smash the foil pan a bit, but that's okay. Or, if you're using a charcoal grill, place the foil pan on the charcoal grate between two piles of charcoal. Prepare the grill for indirect cooking over low heat (250° to 350°F).
- 05 Add two wood chunks to the charcoal or drain and add two handfuls of wood chips to the charcoal or to the smoker box of a gas grill, following manufacturer's instructions. Place the rib rack on the cooking grate over, close the lid, and cook for 1 hour. Meanwhile, make the sauce and the **glaze**.
- 06 In a small saucepan mix the barbecue sauce ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium heat on the stove, stirring often. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer to blend the flavors, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat.
- 07 In another small saucepan mix the **glaze** ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium heat on the stove, stirring often. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer to blend the flavors, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat.
- 08 After the first hour, add the remaining wood chunks to the charcoal or drain and add the remaining wood chips to the charcoal or to the smoker box. Lightly baste the ribs with some **glaze**. Close the lid and cook for another hour. If you're using a charcoal grill, replenish the charcoal as needed to maintain a steady temperature between 250° to 300°F, adding 8 to 10 unlit briquettes after every 45 minutes to 1 hour of cooking time. Leave the lid off the grill for about 5 minutes to help the new briquettes light.
- 09 After the second hour, remove the ribs from the rib rack. Spread the racks out on a clean work area and baste them thoroughly with some **glaze**. Put them back in the rib rack, again all facing the same direction but this time turned over so that the ends facing down earlier now face up. Also, position any ribs that appear to be cooking faster than the others toward the back of the rib rack. Close the lid and cook for another hour. Maintain the temperature of the grill between 250° to 300°F.
- 10 After 3 hours of cooking, check if any rack is ready to come off the grill. They are done when the meat has shrunk back from most of the bones by about ½ inch. When you lift a rack by picking up one end with tongs, bone side up, the rack should bend in the middle and the meat should tear easily. If the meat does not tear easily, continue to cook the racks. The total cooking time could be anywhere between 3 to 4 hours. Not all racks will cook in the same amount of time. Lightly brush the cooked racks with some sauce and, if desired for crispiness, cook them over direct heat for a few minutes. Transfer to a sheet pan and tightly cover with aluminum foil. Let rest for 10 to 15 minutes before serving. Cut the racks between the bones into individual ribs. Serve warm with the remaining sauce on the side.