

BABY BACK RIBS WITH ROASTED PEACH AND SMOKEY BACON BARBEQUE SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

for the BBQ Sauce

4 large ripe peaches, pitted and cut to quarters (leave the skin on)
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/2 cup ketchup
1-2 tablespoons bacon fat (I used 4-6 strips breakfast bacon, rendered ... you can eat the bacon)
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 chipotle chili in adobo, chopped
1 tablespoon garlic, grated
1 tablespoon ginger, grated
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon dijon mustard

for the rib rub

6 tablespoons mustard (I used dijon, but use whatever you have)
2 tablespoons ketchup
3 medium cloves garlic, minced or pressed through garlic press (about 1 tablespoon)
2 teaspoons ground black pepper
1 tablespoon sweet paprika
1 tablespoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt
3 tablespoons brown sugar

For the ribs themselves

2 racks Baby back ribs, 2 1/2 to 3 lbs each, trimmed of fat, membrane removed, each rack cut in half
1/4 cup Lapsang Souchong tea leaves (finely ground), about 10 tea bags
1/2 cup apple juice

DIRECTIONS

First make your barbeque sauce as you can actually make this up to a few weeks ahead of time.

Preheat oven to 425F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with tin foil to capture the peach juices. Place the peaches in a single layer on the prepared pan and sprinkle with brown sugar. Roast until they start to caramelize, about 15-20 minutes.

In a large, nonreactive pot, combine roasted peaches and their juices, the ketchup, bacon fat, vinegar, soy sauce, chipotle pepper, garlic, ginger, Worcestershire sauce and mustard and bring to a boil, reduce the heat, simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool for about 10 minutes. Puree in a food processor or blender or using an immersion blender.

Be forewarned: for the ribs, a large portion of the smoking will take place in the oven, so be aware the smell of smoking indoors (I certainly don't mind, but it can be a strong smell).

For the Rub: Combine mustard, ketchup, and garlic in small bowl; combine pepper, paprika, chili powder, cayenne, salt, and sugar in separate small bowl. Spread mustard mixture in thin, even layer over both sides of ribs; coat both sides with spice mixture, then wrap ribs in plastic and refrigerate for at least 8 hours and up to 24 hours.

Transfer ribs from refrigerator to freezer for 45 minutes. Heat oven to 500F (yes, that's hot). Sprinkle ground tea evenly over bottom of rimmed baking sheet; set wire rack on sheet. Place ribs meat side up on rack and cover with

heavy-duty foil, crimping edges tightly to seal. Roast ribs at high heat for 30 minutes, then reduce oven temperature to 250F, leaving oven door open for 1 minute to cool. While oven is open, carefully open one corner of foil and pour apple juice into bottom of baking sheet; reseal foil. Continue to roast until meat is very tender and begins to pull away from bones, about 2 hours. (Begin to check ribs after 1 1/2 hours; leave loosely covered with foil for remaining cooking time.)

After the 1 1/2 to 2 hours, fire up your grill to a medium-hot temperature.

Remove ribs from oven and slather on the roasted peach and bacon BBQ sauce. Bring outside and carefully place racks on the grill (at this point, they are very “fall off the bone”, so be gentle). Brown ribs until crispy in spots, 5 to 10 minutes. Flip ribs meat side up and cook until well browned and crispy, 5 to 7 minutes more. Cool for at least 10 minutes before cutting into individual ribs. Serve with additional barbecue sauce, if desired.

Note: If you don't have a grill — or it is the dead of winter — you can also do this last step using your oven's broiler.