

Smoked Spare Ribs with Cider

<http://wp.me/pWGRR-1io>



*1 rack spare ribs (5-7 lbs), membrane removed
1 tbsp each kosher salt, black pepper, coconut palm sugar, paprika
1/2 tsp each cayenne or chipotle powder, garlic powder, onion powder
2 1/4 cups hard cider, divided
2 handfuls hickory wood chips*

Serves two

Many barbecuers like to trim their spare ribs before smoking them; typically they remove the skirt (flap) from the cupped side of the ribs, as well as the rib tips (the upper part attached to the long ribs). The general idea is that these parts will cause the ribs to cook unevenly. Personally, I leave everything on so I can get as much meat for my money as possible.

Remove the membrane from the bottom (cupped side) of the ribs. Combine the rub ingredients and rub them generously over the spare ribs, and allow the ribs to come to room temperature (30 mins).

You'll only be using one grill burner (or two, depending on your grill model) to heat the wood chips so that they smoke. Put a smoker box or two filled with wood chips on the hot side of the grill, and a drip pan with two cups of the hard cider on the cool side of the grill. You'll want to soak half of the wood chips for 30 minutes so that they won't start smoking right away. What I like to do is use one smoker box for soaked chips, and another for dry chips – that way, the dry chips burn up in the first hour or two, and the second set of wood chips will smoke for the remaining couple of hours.

Start your grill and leave the burner that's under the wood chips on high heat for 15-20 minutes to start the smoking process. Reduce the heat so that the grill is between 240-260 degrees, then place the ribs over the drip pan.

Grill the ribs for three hours, until the meat starts to recede and you can see the bones sticking out, like in the picture above. Wrap the ribs tightly in two layers of heavy-duty tin foil with the remaining 1/4 cup of hard cider, and place back on the grill to smoke for another 30 minutes. Remove the ribs from the grill and let them cool for another 20 minutes before unwrapping.

That's it! Trim your ribs however you want, and add some barbecue sauce if you'd like. If you're up for it, you can brush on the BBQ sauce and throw it back on the grill under direct heat to caramelize the sauce. It all depends on how you like your ribs.