

Bradley's Simple Style Professional BBQ Fixings Sauce

Pros do not cook with sweet BBQ sauces for a couple of reasons. First, commercial sweet sauces (in particular) are loaded with sugar, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, etc. When applied to meat that is cooking these sugars caramelize (turn brown) and when heated further will turn black and become tar like—ugh!

Second, if you take the time to create some great BBQ with real natural old style wood flavors, why would you then cover it up with sugar or hot sauce? Why not just grill up some wet newspapers and cover them with sweet and/or hot sauce? It's cheaper and they will taste about the same.

Professional BBQ competitors and great BBQ eateries use thinned down unsweetened sauces. Professional competition BBQ is judged on flavor, tenderness (falling off the bone loses points) and juiciness of the food; ribs in this example. Competitors are very careful not to create a too sweet or too hot sauce because thousands of dollars is on the line and trained judges evaluate on meat flavor not the sauces and *if the sauce gets in the way of the meat flavor*, competitors will lose many points.

What follows is an easy to make basic BBQ sauce recipe (moisture adding and holding thin style sauce) that is also excellent for basting. The good news is it is made without the overpowering effects of too much sweetness, heat or other overwhelming *ingredients*.

Last, if you must use sugar based thick sauces after the ribs are cooked, serve the sweet sauce as a side and let your friends and family *ruin* their individual servings. Generally if you ask them to try the ribs first before adding sweet and hot sauces you will immediately have created converts to the better things in life—real genuine low (temperature) and slow (time) smoked barbecue flavor.

2 cups tomato juice
1 cup water
¼ cup apple cider vinegar
¼ cup apple juice
1-2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon paprika
1 level teaspoon dry garlic (granulated is best)
1 level teaspoon chili powder (1/2 if hot)
½ level teaspoon cumin
½ teaspoon orange peel (dry).
½ teaspoon black pepper (course ground)
½ teaspoon hot sauce (do not over do this) you and guests can add more on individual servings.
¼ teaspoon fennel (not whole seeds), you can grind them yourself.

You can increase or reduce the proportions—this recipe will do fine for 6-8 racks of ribs.

Once this is mixed put in a glass container and, if you have the time, allow it to rest overnight in your refrigerator. Use it all as there are no preservatives. This will have a slight tangy flavor to it due to the vinegar and that is the goal for the best pork as it will convert flavor when cooking.

Options for the above rib sauce:

1 shot of whisky can add richness (do not over do this as too much adds a detracting powerful flavor in a sauce).

Optional sweets (if you must have a hint of sweetness): ¼ to ½ cup of regular (non-diet) Coke or Pepsi or increase the apple juice to ½-cup or 4 tablespoons of grape or raspberry berry jam. For use on chicken eliminate the vinegar and add your choice of the above optional sweet suggestions.

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