

## **SMOKY CHIPOTLE GRILLED BABYBACK RIBS**

### **from the Kitchen of Johnnie Gabriel**

Ribs are one of my favorite meals...it doesn't have to be July 4th to enjoy them. The chipotle peppers give this good "heat" but not unpalatable. I don't like a sauce that takes my breath, so I consider this "medium heat." If you like more heat you can add another half - to - whole pepper.

#### **The Ribs**

2 slabs of baby back ribs (3 ½-4 pounds)

1 ½ cup apple cider

1 cup water

#### **The Rub:**

2 tablespoons brown sugar

2 teaspoons salt

2 teaspoons garlic salt

1 tablespoon chili powder

1 tablespoon paprika

2 teaspoons black pepper

#### **The Sauce:**

1 – 28 oz. can crushed tomatoes juice included

½ cup honey

½ cup light brown sugar

2 chipotle peppers in adobo, minced

½ sweet onion, chopped

1/2 cup apple cider vinegar

½ cup apple cider

3 limes, juiced

4 cloves garlic, minced

1 ½ tablespoons dry mustard

2 teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

1 teaspoon cumin

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Remove membrane from back of ribs if still attached. Use a knife to loosen and peel away from the bones. Rinse the ribs and pat dry with a paper towel. Place the ribs in a roasting pan and cover the ribs with the rub, coating them heavily.

Mix the apple cider and the water and pour it into the bottom of the pan. Cover with aluminum foil and roast in oven for 2 hours.

While ribs are roasting, put the tomatoes and juice in heavy medium size sauce pan. Using your hands crush the tomatoes into smaller pieces. Add the remaining ingredients, stirring to blend well and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer 40 minutes stirring 2 or 3 times. Sauce should be reduced and thickened. It will keep refrigerated for 10-14 days.

Preheat a gas or charcoal grill. The heat is correct when you can hold your hand 3-4 inches over the grate for no more than 5 seconds. Remove the ribs from the oven and brush both sides of the ribs with the sauce. Grill the ribs, meat side down for 10-15 minutes, basting several times. Brush the top side of ribs with sauce and turn bone side down, heavily baste the top side and close the grill cover for another 10 minutes, basting intermittently. Remove from grill, cut into serving size pieces and serve with remaining sauce.

If you don't want to use a grill, preheat the broiler. Place the ribs on foil-lined baking sheet. Brush both sides of the ribs with the sauce and cook 4-5 minutes, 6-8 inches from the heating element until the sauce caramelizes...being careful not to burn.

Serves 4-6

*I love leftover ribs, so I cook an extra slab just for leftovers.*