

BABY BACK RIBS

WITH SPICY RUB AND MOLASSES BARBECUE SAUCE



SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 20 minutes | GRILLING TIME: 3¼-4¼ hours



RUB

- 2 tablespoons packed golden brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons chipotle chile powder
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon prepared chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

- 2 racks baby back ribs, each 2-2½ pounds

SAUCE

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 yellow onion, 7-8 ounces, finely chopped
- 1 cup ketchup
- ¾ cup light molasses (not blackstrap)
- ½ cup beer, preferably lager
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1½ teaspoons mustard powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

- 1 cup beer, preferably lager

1. Combine the rub ingredients. Using a dull knife, slide the tip under the membrane covering the back of each rack of ribs. Lift and loosen the membrane until you can pry it up, then grab a corner of it with a paper towel and pull it off. Season the racks all over with the rub, and allow them to stand at room temperature for 45 minutes before grilling.

2. Prepare the grill for indirect cooking over low heat (250° to 350°F).

3. Meanwhile, in a saucepan over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and cook until slightly softened, 3 to 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the remaining sauce ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, until thickened, for 18 to 20 minutes. Remove from the heat.

4. Place the racks, bone side down, over *indirect low heat*, as far from the heat as possible, close the lid, and cook for 3 hours. After the first hour, baste the racks with beer, particularly any areas that are looking a little dry. Continue to baste with beer every hour or so. After 3 hours, check to see if one or both racks are ready to come off the grill. They are done when the meat has shrunk back from the ends of most of the bones by ¼ inch or more. Lift a rack by picking up one end with tongs. It should bend in the middle and the meat should tear easily. If the meat does not tear easily, return the racks to the grill, close the lid, and continue cooking for up to 1 hour more.

5. Remove the racks from the grill and lightly brush them on both sides with some of the sauce. Return the racks to the grill and cook over *indirect low heat*, with the lid closed, until the surface is slightly crispy, 10 to 20 minutes, turning occasionally. Remove from the grill and let rest for 5 to 10 minutes. Cut the racks between the bones into individual ribs and serve warm with the remaining sauce.

