

Slow Cooker Baby Back Ribs

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1 (3-1/2 to 4 pound) baby back pork ribs, cut into 3 to 4 rib sections

1/4 cup dark brown sugar, *packed*

1 tablespoon paprika

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1/2 teaspoon cumin

1/2 teaspoon cayenne

1/4 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper

1 teaspoon thyme, *crushed*

Homemade or commercial barbecue sauce

Spray a 6 quart slow cooker with non-stick cooking spray. Combine all of the dry seasonings and rub all over the ribs. Stack ribs vertically in the slow cooker, with the larger cut bone side down, and leaning against each other. Cover and cook on low for about 6 to 8 hours. Uncover and dab sauce on the ribs. Cover, turn the heat up to high and cook for about 30 minutes or until well glazed. Alternatively, carefully remove ribs to a foil lined pan and place under preheated oven broiler just long enough to caramelize sauce.

Cook's Note: Because this recipe prepares the ribs standing to keep them out of the fat drippings, you can really only do one rack at a time which will feed 2 to 4 people depending on appetites and the side dishes you serve. To prepare a second rack of ribs you'll need a second slow cooker.

Tip: To finish on the grill for some pretty grill marks, skip the second cook in the slow cooker, coat the ribs on both sides with sauce and sear on a medium high hot grill bone side down for about 7 minutes. Add more sauce, turn and sear on the fat side another 6 to 7 minutes, or until done.

Instant Pot/Electronic Pressure Cooker: Place 1/2 cup water and 1/2 cup apple juice or cider in bottom of larger 6 to 8 quart cooker. Use a trivet or rack and lay ribs vertically, with the larger cut bone side down, and wrap rack all around outside of the trivet. May also ball up aluminum foil in the bottom if you don't have a trivet. Season as above. Seal and cook on high for 28 minutes; let pressure release naturally for 20 minutes, then quick release if needed. Carefully remove ribs and transfer to pan. Dab with sauce and finish on grill or under broiler as above.

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Air Fryer: Brands and wattage of air fryers differ. Be sure to keep an eye on the food the first time that you cook a recipe and adjust as needed. Preheat air fryer for 3 minutes at 340 degrees F. Prepare ribs with rub as above, cutting into 2 or 3 rib sections, and place onto racks or in basket, meaty side up. Bake for 20 minutes; stop, turn and bake another 10 minutes. Turn, sauce and cook another 10 minutes. Shake basket or shift racks periodically on first and second cook.

Pineapple Brown Sugar Ribs: Season ribs as above. Increase brown sugar to 3/4 cup, using 1/2 cup and adding just enough pineapple juice to form a paste. Rub all over ribs and proceed with recipe. For the final glaze, mix 1/2 cup light brown sugar with one (6 ounce) can pineapple juice and 1/2 cup of your favorite barbecue sauce.

Recipe Source: DeepSouthDish.com

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