

Slapilicious Baby Back Ribs with Agave Glaze

So you thought agave nectar, relative of the Aloe Vera plant, is only used to make tequila? Well, just like the Aztecs who prized it as a gift from the gods and used “*honey water*” to flavor foods and drinks, it’s my secret ingredient to create prize winning competition ribs. So, check out my recipe with agave nectar which is virtually unknown to backyard cooks (well, maybe not after you read this recipe).



Ingredients

3 racks baby back ribs, about 2 ¾ lbs per rack, membrane removed
½ cup Slap Yo Daddy Meat rub (your choice of original, lower sodium, with MSG, or Hot)
½ cup yellow mustard (plastic squeeze bottle variety)

Wrapping Glaze

1 1/2 cup light brown sugar
1 cup agave nectar (dark colored variety)
1 cup apple juice
Heavy duty aluminum foil

Spritz

1 cup apple juice in spray bottle

BBQ Sauce

1 cup of your favorite BBQ sauce
¼ cup agave nectar (dark colored variety)
2 tablespoons of your favorite hot sauce
¼ cup apple juice

Recipe

1. Preheat your indirect smoker to 275 degrees. Add a couple of tennis sized wood chunks (I like a fruit wood like apple). Toss the wood onto the hot coals only after you put the rib racks in.
2. Apply some regular yellow mustard on both sides of the rib racks. Spread it evenly. Only a thin layer is needed to help the rub to adhere.
3. Apply about 2 tablespoons of SYD rub on each side taking care to apply it evenly covering all exposed surfaces of the rib rack.
4. Let it sit for 30 minutes before placing into smoker. I use a rib rack as I like to cook my ribs upright to give it proper airflow and even color. If you don't have a rib rack, just lay them flat on the grate about ½ inch apart.
5. Spray the racks with apple juice after 90 minutes. Repeat every 15 minutes until the crust or bark is set on the ribs (about 2:15 to 2:45).
6. Test that the crust has set by scratching the surface with your fingernail. If the crust has not set, the rub will come off in your nail. Check back after 15 minutes if it has not yet set.
7. Tear off three sheets of heavy duty aluminum foil wide enough to wrap the ribs burrito-style (loosely by folding over the sides and then the top and bottom).
8. Remove ribs once crust has set.
9. Place a rack with meat side up in the middle of the aluminum foil.
10. Apply an even coat of brown sugar. Use more or less depending on how sweet you want it.
11. Drizzle on the agave nectar; about 1 tablespoon each side.
12. Drizzle on the apple juice; about 1 tablespoon each side.
13. Flip over so the meat-side is down and repeat with brown sugar, agave, and apple juice on the rib side.
14. Wrap it burrito style so it can be opened easily later to check for tenderness.
15. Repeat for second and third racks; return all racks to smoker
16. Check back in 1 hour and use toothpick to check for tenderness by probing each rack between the bones. The toothpick should penetrate easily into the rib meat. You can also tell by the amount of pullback of the meat from the bones. If not tender, check back in 10 minute increments until all racks are done.
17. Combine ingredients to make BBQ sauce.
18. When racks are done, remove from smoker and let rest for 10 minutes.
19. Remove ribs from foil pouch and apply a thin layer of BBQ sauce on both sides and put back into the foil pouch to set the sauce. You may set the ribs in a igloo or warming oven to keep warm. The residual heat is sufficient to set the glaze.
20. Cut into individual bones and serve.