

Rubbing me the right way



I was chatting with some people yesterday (you'll find many of my blogs come from chatting with other people) and we were talking about ribs and bbq sauces and tastes.

Now, they were talking about oven baking and what not, but thankfully, here in balmy South Florida, we can use the bbq grill all year round (in fact, I'm grilling a porterhouse for dinner tonight).

One of the people was distressed over running low on brown sugar for her bbq sauce. I am a big fan of home-made bbq sauce (and brown sugar), but I pointed out two things I felt she could "substitute" for brown sugar: One, just use less. I like to change the taste of my bbq sauce subtly each time I make it. As such, I never write down a recipe or measurements...I just cook to taste. Less sugar just means more spicy sauce. Two, learn to master the dry rub.

The dry rub is incomparable when preparing ribs, especially on the grill. The mixture is as variable as you can think of, though you will usually see common ingredients in all, with the individual bbq'er (in my case), adapting to what they like. For me, I like to add "hot" seasonings. That means you'll taste the chili, red and cayenne pepper in the mix.

The beauty of a dry rub is two-fold. First, it is a "dry" rub, meaning that it will not blacken the ribs while cooking. A wet sauce can quickly burn into the meat, prematurely blackening or crisping your ribs. Second, because the dry rub is applied to the meat in advance of cooking and allowed some

time to "work" its way in, your ribs will come out already flavored, so much so that a bbq sauce becomes optional.

For appearance and flavor, some people will apply a little bbq sauce on the last 5 or 10 minutes of cooking of the ribs. I will usually run a light baste on one side for about 5 minutes and then flip them on the grill to hit the other side.

Though my cholesterol levels preclude me from eating ribs every week (at least until I can get the doctor to give me a pill so I can eat stuff that's bad for me again), I try to run a rack or two each month. My guests at my bbq's always wonder why I have so many racks of ribs grilling...even after they're on dessert! How else will I have the excuse to eat ribs every day? Somebody has to eat them! I can't just leave them in the freezer or give them away.

That would rub me the wrong way.