

# Sous Vide Barbecue Pork Ribs Recipe

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I was a skeptic at first, but I'm going to say it now: When done properly, ribs cooked via sous vide are every bit as good as traditional barbecue, if not better. Not only that, but they're far more replicable (no weather or wind or uneven heat from coals to deal with), they take much less effort (no babysitting that smoker!), they take less practice (anybody who can turn on an iPod can turn on a sous vide cooker), and, to top it off, they can be cooked year-round, indoors.

## Why It Works

- Sous-vide techniques provide optimal control for better texture and flavor.
- A balanced spice rub with a touch of liquid smoke produces plenty of smoke flavor in the meat, with no need for an actual smoker.
- Optional Prague Powder produces a nice pink "smoke" ring.

Read more: **The Food Lab's Complete Guide to Sous Vide Barbecue Pork Ribs**

(<https://www.seriouseats.com/2015/09/the-food-lab-complete-guide-sous-vide-pork-ribs.html>)

**YIELD:** Makes 2 racks of ribs, serving 4

**ACTIVE TIME:** 1 hour

**TOTAL TIME:** 16 to 50 hours

**RATED:**

## Ingredients

### For the Spice Rub:

1/3 cup paprika

1/3 cup dark brown sugar

1/4 cup kosher salt

1 teaspoon Prague  
Powder #1 (optional; see  
note)

## Directions

1. **For the Spice Rub:** Working in batches, combine the paprika, brown sugar, salt, Prague Powder (if using), mustard seed, black pepper, garlic powder, oregano, coriander seed, and red pepper flakes in a spice grinder and reduce to a fine powder.
2. **For the Sauce (if using):** Combine 3 tablespoons spice rub, grated onion, ketchup, mustard, molasses, Worcestershire sauce, vinegar, and liquid smoke in a

2 tablespoons whole yellow mustard seed

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons granulated garlic powder

1 tablespoon dried oregano

1 tablespoon whole coriander seed

1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

**For the Sauce** (if making sauced ribs):

1 medium yellow onion, grated on the large holes of a box grater

1 1/2 cups ketchup

2 tablespoons spicy brown mustard

1/3 cup dark molasses

1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

3/4 teaspoon Wright's or Colgin liquid hickory smoke

**For the Ribs:**

medium saucepan and whisk to combine. Bring to a bare simmer and cook until reduced and thickened, about 20 minutes. Set aside.

3. **Prepare the Ribs:** Remove the papery membrane on the back of the ribs, using a paper towel or kitchen towel to grip it and pulling it away in one piece. Divide each rack of ribs into three to four portions with three to four ribs each by cutting through the meat in between the ribs. Rub ribs generously on all sides with the remaining spice rub mixture. (Set aside 3 tablespoons spice rub if making dry-style ribs.)
4. Place individual portions of rubbed ribs in vacuum bags. (Fold over the top of each bag while you add the ribs so that no rub or pork juices get on the edges of the bags, which can weaken the seal.) Add 4 drops (about 1/8 teaspoon) of liquid smoke to each bag. Seal the bags, transfer to refrigerator, and let rest for 4 to 12 hours.
5. **When Ready to Cook:** Set your precision cooker to 145°F (63°C) for extra-meaty ribs or 165°F (74°C) for more traditionally textured ribs.
6. Add ribs to the water bath and cover it with a lid, aluminum foil, or table tennis balls. Cook for 36 hours at 145°F or 12 hours at 165°F. Transfer cooked ribs to a large bowl of water filled with ice to chill thoroughly. Ribs can be stored in the refrigerator at this stage for up to 5 days before finishing.
7. **To Finish Dry-Style in the Oven:** Remove ribs from vacuum bags and carefully pat dry with paper towels. Rub with remaining 3 tablespoons spice rub. Adjust

2 whole racks St. Louis-cut pork ribs

About 3/4 teaspoon Wright's or Colgin liquid hickory smoke

oven racks to upper and lower-middle positions and preheat oven to 300°F (150°C). Line two rimmed baking sheets with aluminum foil and place a wire rack in each. Divide ribs evenly on racks, facing up. Transfer ribs to oven and cook until a crusty bark has formed, about 40 minutes. Serve.

8. **To Finish Dry-Style on the Grill:** Remove ribs from vacuum bags and carefully pat dry with paper towels. Rub with remaining 3 tablespoons spice rub. Light one half chimney full of charcoal (about 2 1/2 quarts of coals). When all the charcoal is lit and covered with gray ash, pour out and arrange the coals on one side of the charcoal grate. Set cooking grate in place, cover grill, and allow to preheat for 5 minutes. Alternatively, set half the burners on a gas grill to the medium heat setting, cover, and preheat for 10 minutes. Scrape the grill grates clean with a grill scraper, then oil the grates by holding an oil-dipped kitchen towel or paper towels in a set of tongs and rubbing them over the grates 5 to 6 times. Place the ribs, facing up, over the cooler side of the grill. Cover and cook until ribs are heated through and dry to the touch, about 15 minutes. Transfer ribs to hotter side of grill and continue grilling, turning occasionally, until a crusty bark has formed, about 10 minutes. Serve.
  
9. **To Finish Sauced Ribs in the Oven:** Remove ribs from vacuum bags and carefully pat dry with paper towels. Adjust oven racks to upper and lower-middle positions and preheat oven to 300°F (150°C). Line two rimmed baking sheets with aluminum foil and place a wire rack in each. Divide ribs evenly on racks, facing

up. Transfer ribs to oven and cook until surface is sizzling and ribs are heated through, about 20 minutes. Brush ribs with sauce and return to oven for 10 minutes. Remove from oven, brush with another layer of sauce, and return to oven until sauce is dried and sticky, about 10 minutes longer. Remove ribs from oven, paint with one last layer of sauce, and serve, passing extra sauce at the table.

10. **To Finish Sauced Ribs on the Grill:** Remove ribs from vacuum bags and carefully pat dry with paper towels. Light one half chimney full of charcoal (about 2 1/2 quarts of coals). When all the charcoal is lit and covered with gray ash, pour out and arrange the coals on one side of the charcoal grate. Set cooking grate in place, cover grill, and allow to preheat for 5 minutes. Alternatively, set half the burners on a gas grill to the medium heat setting, cover, and preheat for 10 minutes. Scrape the grill grates clean with a grill scraper, then oil the grates by holding an oil-dipped kitchen towel or paper towels in a set of tongs and rubbing them over the grates 5 to 6 times. Place the ribs, facing up, over the cooler side of the grill. Cover and cook until ribs are heated through and dry to the touch, about 15 minutes. Brush ribs with a layer of sauce and transfer ribs to hotter side of grill. Cover and cook until sauce is mostly dry, about 7 minutes. Brush with a second layer of sauce, cover, and cook until second layer is sticky, about 5 minutes longer. Remove ribs from grill, paint with one last layer of sauce, and serve, passing extra sauce at the table.

## Special Equipment

**Sous vide precision cooker**, spice grinder, 2 rimmed baking sheets, 2 wire racks

## Notes

Prague Powder #1 can be added to give the ribs a red "smoke" ring. You can order it [online](http://www.amazon.com/Hoosier-Hill-Farm-Prague-Powder/dp/B008X6KE0E/?tag=serieats-20) (<http://www.amazon.com/Hoosier-Hill-Farm-Prague-Powder/dp/B008X6KE0E/?tag=serieats-20>).

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