

How to Marinate Ribs

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A marinade is a wet mixture of herbs, oil and acid used to flavor meat. The combination of ingredients tenderizes meat and makes it more flavorful. There are hundreds of marinade recipes, but spicy and sweet flavors make for the best ribs. Prepare the ribs first by defrosting them, removing the membrane, and rinsing them. Then whip up a steakhouse, Asian-inspired, or coffee-molasses marinade and [cook the ribs](#). Make sure you plan ahead though—for the best results, you'll want to marinate ribs overnight.

Things You'll Need

- ☐ Whisk
- ☐ Bowl
- ☐ Lid
- ☐ Large plastic bag/container
- ☐ Basting brush or spatula
- ☐ Refrigerator
- ☐ Saucepan
- ☐ Knife
- ☐ barbecue/oven/grill

Ingredients

■ Barbecue Marinade

- ☐ 1 bottle of barbecue sauce
- ☐ 1 bottle of beer (optional)
- ☐ Honey (optional, to taste)
- ☐ Hot sauce (optional, to taste)
- ☐ Lime juice (optional, to taste)
- ☐ Garlic (optional, to taste)

■ Steakhouse Marinade

- ☐ 1 cup (0.2l) of vegetable oil
- ☐ 1/2 cup (118ml) of apple cider vinegar
- ☐ 3 tbsp. (35g) of packed brown sugar
- ☐ 1 tbsp. (15ml) of soy sauce
- ☐ 1 tbsp. (15ml) of Worcestershire sauce
- ☐ 1 tbsp. (9.3g) of garlic powder
- ☐ 1/2 tsp. (1.2g) of onion powder
- ☐ 1/2 tsp. (3g) of kosher salt

■ Asian-Inspired Marinade

- ☐ 1 cup (0.2l) of honey
- ☐ 1/3 cup (79ml) of soy sauce
- ☐ 3 tbsp. (45ml) of sherry
- ☐ 2 tsp. (6.2g) of garlic powder
- ☐ 1/2 tsp. (0.9g) of crushed red pepper

■ Coffee-Molasses Marinade

- ☐ 1 cup (0.2l) of strong coffee
- ☐ 1 red onion
- ☐ 1/2 cup (118ml) of molasses
- ☐ 1/2 cup (118ml) of red wine vinegar
- ☐ 1/4 cup (59ml) of Dijon mustard
- ☐ 1 tbsp. (15ml) of Worcestershire sauce
- ☐ 1/4 cup (59ml) of soy sauce
- ☐ 1 tbsp. (15ml) of hot sauce

- ☐ 2 tbsp. (30g) of shallot
- ☒ **Cola Marinade**
- ☐ 2 litres (8.5 c) of cola
- ☐ 2 tbsp. (30g) of chili powder
- ☐ 1 cup (200 ml) of water
- ☐ 1 onion
- ☐ 2 garlic cloves
- ☐ 1/2 c (118ml) of ketchup
- ☐ 2 tbsp (30g) of brown sugar
- ☐ 2 tbsp (30g) of Worcester sauce
- ☐ 2 tbsp (30g) of apple cider vinegar.

Method
1

Method 1 of 2: Soaking the Ribs in Marinade



1 Defrost the ribs completely in the fridge for 2-4 days. Before marinating or cooking ribs, make sure they are completely defrosted. The safest and easiest way to defrost ribs is to put them in the refrigerator 2-4 days before you want to cook them.

Using this method, the ribs will take **1 day for every 4 pounds (1.8 kg) of meat to defrost.**



2 Defrost ribs in a few hours using a cold water bath. Fill a bowl or the sink with cold water. Submerge the ribs completely in the water in their original packaging or an airtight plastic bag. Add cold water as needed to keep the temperature around 40 °F (4 °C).^[1]

- Using this method, the ribs will take 30 minutes per 1 pound (0.45 kg) to defrost.



3 Rinse the defrosted ribs in cool water. Unwrap the ribs and run them under cool water. This will get rid of any bone bits or debris left over from butchering.^[2]



4 Trim the membrane from the underside of the ribs. The **membrane** is a paper-thin layer on the bone side of the ribs. Many times, your ribs will already be skinned of their membrane. If not, insert a butter knife between the bone and the membrane to create separation. It should come away easily, but use a sharper knife if it doesn't. Then, use your hands to pull the membrane off of the bones.[3]

- Leaving membrane on the ribs will result in a tough, rubbery texture.



5 Rub the marinade into the ribs. Rub the marinade into the meat using a basting brush, spatula, or your hands. Cover all of the meat on both sides with a thick layer.[4]



6 Put the ribs in a covered container and refrigerate them for 2-24 hours. Allow at least 2 hours for the marinade to absorb into the meat, or up to 24 hours for the most flavor. Keep the ribs moist by adding more marinade about every 3 hours.^[5]

- Always marinate meat in the fridge and do not reuse leftover marinade.



7 Grill ribs for a smoky flavor or cook ribs in the oven for a tender texture. Grill ribs over indirect heat for about an hour and finish over direct heat for 20 minutes until they are done. Or cook ribs at 275 °F (135 °C) for 2-2 ½ hours in the oven.^[6]

- When the meat starts to pull away from the ends of the bones, you can start testing to see if the ribs are done.

Method 2 of 2: Making Different Kinds of Marinades



1 Use store-bought barbecue sauce for an easy, flavorful marinade. To make an easy marinade, simply spread your favorite barbecue sauce over the ribs and marinate for at least an hour. You can also add more flavor to a store-bought sauce by adding honey, hot sauce, lime juice, or garlic to taste. Or make drunken barbecue ribs by adding a bottle of beer to the barbecue sauce.[7]

- To make this even easier, try [cooking the ribs in a slow cooker](#).



2 Make a steakhouse rib marinade for a classic flavor. Whisk together 1 cup (200ml) of vegetable oil, 1/2 cup (118ml) of apple cider vinegar, 3 tbsp. (35g) of brown sugar, 1 tbsp. (15ml) of soy sauce, 1 tbsp. (15ml) of Worcestershire sauce, 1 tbsp. (10g) garlic powder, 1/2 tsp. (1g) of onion powder and salt to taste in a large container. Marinate the ribs at least 2 hours, or ideally overnight. If you don't have a container that is big enough to fit the rack, put it into a very large plastic bag or cut the ribs in half and place them in two different containers.[8]

- Reserve some of the marinade before putting it on the meat to have extra sauce for the cooked ribs.



3 Bring out sweet and spicy flavors with an Asian-inspired marinade. Mix together 1 cup (200mL) of honey, 1/3 cup (80ml) of soy sauce, 3 tbsp. (45ml) of sherry, 2 tsp. (6g) of garlic powder, and 1/2 tsp. (1g) of crushed red pepper. Heat the mixture on the stove over medium heat and stir the ingredients until they are combined. Allow the mixture to cool completely before pouring it over the meat. Marinate the meat for 12 hours for ideal flavor.^[9]

- If you want a spicier marinade, add more crushed red pepper.



4 Create a unique flavor with a coffee-molasses marinade. Chop 1 onion and 2 tbsp. (30g) of shallot and cook them over medium heat in 1 cup (200mL) of strong brewed coffee with 1/2 cup (118ml) of molasses, 1/2 cup (118ml) of red wine vinegar, 1/4 cup (60ml) of Dijon mustard, 1 tbsp. (15ml) of Worcestershire sauce, 1/4 cup (60ml) of soy sauce, 1 tbsp. (15ml) of hot sauce. Once all the ingredients are combined, take them off of the heat and reserve 1 cup (200mL) for dipping sauce. Let the rest cool, then marinate the meat for at least 2 hours.^[10]

- You can also baste the meat with extra marinade while it is cooking.



5 Use classic American flavors to make cola-marinated ribs. Use 2 litres (8.5 c) of your favorite cola mixed with 2 tbsp. (30g) of chili powder, 1 cup (200 ml) of water, 1 onion, 2 garlic cloves, 1/2 c (118ml) of ketchup, and 2 tbsp (30g) each of brown sugar, Worcester sauce, and apple cider vinegar. Add salt and cayenne pepper to your taste. Heat the mixture on the stove over a medium flame until it thickens. Cool the thickened sauce and blend it in a blender for 1 minute or until it is smooth.[11]



Community Q&A

Question

Is it okay to marinate ribs for two days?



Community Answer

As long as the meat is well coated in the marinade and it is kept in the refrigerator, it is fine to marinate for a couple of days.

Helpful 18 Not Helpful 8

Question

Do you cover them when you cook them in an oven?



Community Answer

Do a dry rub first and cover with foil and cook in the oven. After that, put on a liquid marinade like BBQ and broil it for like 5 minutes, with no cover.

Helpful 0 Not Helpful 0

References

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