

Ribs

ST. LOUIS-STYLE RIBS WITH SOY-GINGER BARBECUE SAUCE

ACTIVE: 1 hr | TOTAL: 2½ hr (plus 8-hr marinating) | SERVES: 6 to 8

FOR THE RIBS

- 2 racks St. Louis-style spareribs (3 to 3¾ pounds each)
- 2 tablespoons scotch, whiskey or bourbon (optional)
- 2 tablespoons packed light brown sugar
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika

FOR THE BARBECUE SAUCE

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons scotch, whiskey or bourbon (optional)
- ¾ cup ketchup
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- 1 tablespoon Asian chili-garlic sauce
- Freshly ground pepper

1. Prepare the ribs: Place the ribs bone-side up on a work surface. Starting at one end, insert the tip of a knife between the membrane and the bones to loosen the membrane, then pull it off. Flip the ribs so they are meat-side up. Rub each rack with 1 tablespoon scotch, if using. Combine the brown sugar, 5 teaspoons salt, 1 teaspoon pepper, the ground ginger and paprika in a small bowl. Rub the ribs on both sides with the spice mixture. Wrap each rack in heavy-duty foil, then wrap in another layer of foil, making sure the seam is on the opposite side to prevent leaking. Refrigerate 8 hours or overnight.

2. Preheat a grill to medium low (350° on gas or 335° on charcoal). Put the foil-wrapped ribs meat-side down on the grates. Grill, carefully flipping the ribs every 30 minutes, until the meat is tender but not falling apart and the tip of a paring knife inserted into the ribs meets slight resistance, 1 to 1½ hours. (If using charcoal, add more coals as needed so the temperature stays between 300° and 325°.)

3. Meanwhile, make the barbecue sauce: Heat the vegetable oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic and fresh ginger and cook, stirring often, until just beginning to brown, 5 to 6 minutes. If using the scotch, remove the pan from the heat and stir in the scotch, then return to the heat and cook until almost dry, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in ½ cup water, the ketchup, brown sugar, vinegar, soy sauce, mustard, chili-garlic sauce and ½ teaspoon pepper. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thick and glossy, about 30 minutes; you should have about 1½ cups sauce. Transfer to a blender and puree until smooth. (You can make the sauce up to 1 day ahead; refrigerate until ready to use.) Divide the sauce between 2 bowls—half for cooking and half for serving.

4. When the ribs are ready, transfer to a baking sheet. Unwrap and discard the foil and any accumulated juices. Brush the meat side with the barbecue sauce and return to the grill, meat-side up. Cover and grill, moving the ribs around to prevent flare-ups, until the sauce cooks in, about 5 minutes. Brush the ribs with more sauce, flip and cook until lightly charred, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip the ribs so they're meat-side up again, brush with more sauce and grill 5 more minutes. Flip the ribs again and brush the bone side with sauce, then flip again and brush the meat side one last time. Transfer to a cutting board and let rest 15 minutes.

5. Cut the racks into individual ribs. Serve with the reserved barbecue sauce.

