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Recipes from ***Ribs, Chops, Steaks & Wings*** by Ray "Dr. BBQ" Lampe. Published by Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA. Reprinted with permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

Apricot-Glazed Baby Back Ribs

4 servings

I've always liked savory dishes with the taste of apricot, and pork is the best fit of all. I first tried this technique with peach preserves, and you could certainly substitute that here. But I like the subtlety of the apricot even better. The combination of the sweet preserves with the salty soy sauce and the tangy hot sauce is great. When you add the distinct flavor of the Worcestershire, and then cut it all with your favorite barbecue sauce, well, you end up with some unique and fabulous ribs. I call for your favorite barbecue sauce in this recipe. You can use any of the barbecue sauces from within the book, a favorite bottled sauce, or your own secret recipe. These would go very well served with a baked sweet potato and creamy coleslaw.

2 slabs pork loin baby back ribs, about 2 1/4 pounds each
Rib Rub #99 (page 21), as needed

Apricot Glaze

1 cup apricot preserves
1/2 cup your favorite barbecue sauce
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon hot sauce

1. At least a half hour and up to 4 hours before you plan to cook the ribs, peel the membrane off the back of the ribs and trim any excessive fat. Season the ribs liberally on both sides with the Rib Rub. Refrigerate.
2. To make the glaze: In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the preserves. When the preserves are soft, add the barbecue, soy, Worcestershire, and hot sauces. Mix well and cook for about 3 minutes, until warm and well blended. Divide the glaze equally between two bowls, one for brushing on the ribs as they grill and one for serving at the table. Set aside.
3. Prepare the grill or smoker for cooking over indirect heat at 300degrees F using apple or cherry wood for flavor. Place the ribs directly on the cooking grate, meaty side up. Cook for 1 hour. Flip and cook for another 30 minutes. Flip again and cook until they are nicely caramelized and golden brown, about another 30 minutes but may vary depending on your grill. Transfer the ribs to a platter.

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Apricot-Glazed Baby Back Ribs, continued

4. Lay out two big double-layered sheets of heavy-duty aluminum foil, each long enough to wrap a whole slab of the ribs. Transfer the ribs to the foil, meaty-side up. Fold the foil up around the ribs into a packet. Seal the packets snugly, being careful not to puncture the foil with the rib bones. Return to the grill or smoker for 45 minutes to 1 hour to reach your desired degree of tenderness. The best way to determine the doneness is to open the foil after 45 minutes and feel the texture of the meat. It should be very tender. Transfer the foil packages to a platter. Raise the temp of the grill to 400 degrees F. Remove the ribs from the foil and return to the cooking grate. Brush with glaze and flip. Brush the other side and cook for 5 minutes. Flip again, brush, and cook for 5 minutes. Discard the glaze that you've been brushing with. Remove the ribs to the platter. Serve 1/2 slab to each guest with the second bowl of the glaze on the side.

Rib Rub #99

Makes about 1-1/2 cup

3/4 cup Sugar In The Raw
1/2 cup salt
1/4 cup paprika
2 tablespoons finely ground black pepper
1 tablespoon granulated garlic
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon chili powder
1 teaspoon dry mustard
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice

Combine all ingredients, mix well, and store in an airtight container.