

## **211 – UP IN SMOKE**

SMOKED DUCK WITH CHINESE FLAVORINGS  
COUSIN DAVE'S CHOCOLATE CHILI RIBS  
SMOKE-ROASTED PEARS

### **SMOKED DUCK WITH CHINESE FLAVORINGS**

Source: How to Grill, pg. 270

Method: Rotisserie/Spit-Roasting

Serves: 2 to 4

Advance Preparation: 6 to 24 hours for marinating the duck

1 duck (5 to 6 pounds)

1/4 cup soy sauce

2 tablespoons honey

1 tablespoon Asian (dark) sesame oil, plus 1 to 2 tablespoons  
for basting

1 teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder (See NOTE)

1 clove garlic, minced, plus 1 clove garlic, crushed

1 slice fresh ginger (1/4 inch), lightly crushed

1 scallion, trimmed and lightly crushed

Tea-Smoking Mixture for Duck (optional; recipe follows)

You'll also need:

1 cup wood chips, soaked for 1 hour in cold water to cover, then drained;  
rotisserie; butcher's string

*No rotisserie. Indirect grill.*

Remove the packet of giblets from the duck's cavity and set aside for another use. Remove and discard the fat just inside the neck and body cavities. Rinse the duck, inside and out, under cold running water and then drain and blot dry, inside and out, with paper towels. Remove the wishbone.

Make the marinade: Combine the soy sauce, honey, 1 tablespoon oil, five-spice powder, and minced garlic in a bowl and stir.

Place the ginger, scallion, crushed garlic, and 1 tablespoon marinade in the body cavity of the duck and another tablespoon in the smaller neck cavity. Truss the duck. Place in a baking dish and pour the remaining marinade over it. Gently prick the skin all over and let the duck marinate, covered, in the refrigerator for at least 6 hours, preferably 24, turning it several times.

Set up the grill for rotisserie grilling and preheat to high. If using a charcoal grill, place a large drip pan in the center. If using a gas grill with a smoker box, add all the wood chips and the Tea-Smoking Mixture, if desired (for the smoking mixture, line the smoker box with aluminum foil first), and preheat until you see smoke. If using a regular gas grill, place the wood chips and smoking mixture (again, if desired) in a smoker pouch and preheat until you see smoke.

*\*\*\*Indirect grill.*

Skewer the duck on the spit. When ready to cook, if using a charcoal grill, place all the wood chips and the Tea-Smoking Mixture, if desired, on the coals. Attach the spit to the rotisserie mechanism and turn on the motor. Grill until the skin is dark golden brown and the meat is tender, 1-1/2 to 2 hours. Baste with oil after 1 hour and every 15 minutes thereafter. If using a charcoal grill, you'll need to add 18 fresh coals after 1 hour. To test for doneness, insert an instant-read meat thermometer into the thickest part of a thigh, but not touching the bone. The internal temperature should be about 165 to 170 degrees F. Carefully remove the duck from the spit. Let rest 5 minutes before carving or serving.

NOTE: Chinese five-spice powder is available commercially at most supermarkets. If you cannot find it, blend your own using the following recipe:

### **Sub-Recipe 1: Chinese Five-Spice Powder**

Makes 1/3 cup

- 3 whole star anise
- 2 cinnamon sticks (3 inches each)
- 3 tablespoons Sichuan peppercorns
- 2 tablespoons fennel seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon whole cloves

Heat a dry skillet over medium-low heat. Add the spices and toast until fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer the spices to a bowl and let cool completely.

Break the star anise and cinnamon sticks into pieces. Grind the spices to a fine powder in a spice mill. Transfer to a jar, cover, and store away from heat and light. The powder will keep for several months.

### **Sub-Recipe 2: Tea-Smoking Mixture for Duck**

Makes enough to smoke 1 or 2 ducks

- 1/3 cup white rice
- 1/3 cup black tea
- 1/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 3 cinnamon sticks (each 3 inches long)
- 3 whole star anise
- 3 strips tangerine zest (each 1/2 by 2 inches)

Place all the ingredients in a small bowl and stir to mix.

## COUSIN DAVE'S CHOCOLATE CHILI RIBS

Source: Raichlen on Ribs, by Steven Raichlen (Workman, 2006)

Method: Indirect grilling

Serves: 4

3 to 6 canned chipotle peppers with 1 tablespoon of their juice  
1/2 medium onion, coarsely chopped (about 1/2 cup)  
2 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped  
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus 1/4 cup chopped cilantro for garnish  
1/2 ounce semisweet chocolate, coarsely grated or cut into pieces  
2 strips (each 1/2 by 1-1/2 inches) fresh lemon zest, coarsely chopped  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
1 tablespoon pure chili powder, such as ancho chili powder  
2 teaspoons coarse salt (kosher or sea)  
1 teaspoon lemon pepper  
2 to 3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
2 racks baby back pork ribs (4 to 5 pounds total)  
Lime wedges, for serving

You'll also need:

1-1/2 cups wood chips or chunks (preferably oak), soaked for 1 hour in water to cover, then drained

Place the chipotles and their juice, onion, garlic, 1/4 cup of cilantro, chocolate, lemon zest, brown sugar, chili powder, salt, and lemon pepper in a food processor and puree, adding enough oil to make a thick paste.

Prepare the ribs. Place a rack of ribs meat side down on a baking sheet. Remove the thin, papery membrane from the back of the rack by inserting a slender implement, such as a butter knife or the tip of a meat thermometer, under it. The best place to start is on one of the middle bones. Using a dishcloth, paper towel, or pliers to gain a secure grip, peel off the membrane. Repeat with the remaining rack.

Using a rubber spatula, spread the chipotle paste on both sides of the racks. Cover the ribs with plastic wrap and let marinate in the refrigerator for at

least 4 hours or as long as overnight. The longer the ribs marinate, the richer the flavor will be.

Set up the grill for indirect grilling and preheat to medium (325 to 350 degrees F). Place a large drip pan in the center of the grill under the grate.

When ready to cook, brush and oil the grill grate. Place the ribs bone side down in the center of the grate over the drip pan and away from the heat. (If your grill has limited space, stand the racks of ribs upright in a rib rack.) If cooking on a charcoal grill and using wood chips, toss half of them on each mound of coals. Cover the grill and cook the ribs until well browned, cooked through, and tender enough to pull apart with your fingers, 1-1/4 to 1-1/2 hours. When the ribs are done, the meat will have shrunk back from the ends of the bones by about 1/4 inch. If using a charcoal grill, replenish the coals as needed.

Transfer the ribs to a large platter or cutting board. Let the ribs rest for a few minutes, then cut the racks in half or into individual ribs. Sprinkle the ribs with the remaining cilantro. Serve at once with lime wedges.

Variation: How to cook Chipotle Chocolate Ribs in a Smoker: Set up and light the smoker according to the manufacturer's instructions and preheat to low (225 to 250 degrees F). Place the ribs in the smoker bone side down and smoke until cooked through, 4 to 5 hours. You'll need to replenish the wood chips or chunks after the first and second hour of smoking and to replenish the coals every hour.

## CHARROS (TEX-MEX BEANS)

Place of Origin: Texas

Serves 8-10

Texas-style brisket or ribs without charros is a little like a cowboy without a Stetson hat or Tony Romas. These soulful spicy pinto beans turn up wherever briskets or ribs are roasted to smoky perfection or cabritos (baby goats) come off the turn spit crackling crisp. Native to northern Mexico, charros have become an essential part of Texas barbecue. But unlike the sweet baked beans served with Southern-style barbecue, charros contain not a whit of sugar-which makes them the perfect accompaniment to beef. A simple version might contain a little onion or jalapeno for flavor; the following recipe offers a tongue tingling blast of bacon, tomato, and chilies. By the way, don't be surprised by the soupy consistency of the beans: charros are always served with lots of flavorful broth.

Tips: The purist will want to start with dry pinto beans and cook them from scratch. Not only does this give you the satisfaction of doing the job right. You can also control the sodium (most canned beans are off the chart in salt content) and you get a wonderful bean broth. However, in our hurried age, not everyone will have the time to cook dried beans, so I offer a highly tasty version of charros made with canned beans below.

1 pound (2cups) dried pinto beans  
1 medium onion, cut in half  
2 bay leaves  
2 cloves  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

To finish the charros:

1 tablespoon vegetable oil or butter  
3 strips bacon, cut crosswise into strips  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 medium tomato, seeded and finely chopped  
2 to 4 jalapeno chilies, seeded and diced (for spicier charros leave the seeds in)  
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Spread the beans on a baking sheet and pick through them, removing any twigs or pebbles. Rinse the beans in a colander. Place in a large bowl with cold water to cover by 4 inches. Soak the beans in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours, preferably overnight.
2. Drain the beans in a colander, rinse well, and place them in a large pot with water to cover by 4 inches. Pin the bay leaves to the onion halves with cloves and add to the beans. Gradually bring the beans to a boil. Reduce the heat and gently simmer the beans, loosely covered, until tender (you should be able to crush one between your thumb and forefinger.) The beans should be soupy, but not watery. Add a little salt and pepper.
3. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a skillet. Add the bacon and cook until lightly browned, 3 minutes. Add the onion and garlic and cook until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the tomato, jalapenos, and cilantro and cook until the tomato juices have evaporated, 3 minutes. Stir the mixture into the beans and simmer for 10 minutes. Correct the seasoning, adding the salt and pepper to taste: the beans should be highly seasoned. Serve the charros in small bowls (to hold the broth.)

## **SUB-RECIPE QUICK CHARROS**

Try to find a low sodium bean for this recipe. The best place to look for low sodium beans is at a natural foods store.

Serves 8 to 10

- 2 15 ounce cans cooked pinto beans
- 3 2 cups chicken or veal stock (for really great charros, use smoked chicken stock)

To finish the charros:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil or butter
- 3 strips bacon, cut crosswise into strips
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 medium tomato, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 to 4 jalapeno chilies, seeded and finely chopped (for spicier charros, leave the seeds in.)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Rinse the beans in a colander under cold running water. (This removes some of the excess salt.) Transfer the beans to a saucepan and add the stock. Simmer for 5 minutes.

2. Cook the flavorings as described in Step 3 above. Finish the beans as described above, adding plenty of salt and pepper to taste.

## SMOKE-ROASTED PEARS

Source: Adapted from How to Grill, pg. 430

Method: Indirect

Serves: 6

6 large ripe pears, preferably with stems  
1/2 lemon  
1 8-ounce package cream cheese, at room temperature  
3 tablespoons brown sugar  
1 tablespoon candied ginger, chopped  
1/2 teaspoon grated lemon zest  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg  
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves  
2 tablespoons Poire William eau de vie  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
Vanilla or cinnamon ice cream (optional; for serving)  
1/4 cup walnuts, toasted and coarsely chopped  
(optional; for serving)

You'll also need:

1 lightly oiled aluminum foil pan large enough to hold the pears; 1 cup wood chips, preferably apple, pear, cherry, or maple), soaked for 1 hour in cold water to cover, then drained; one sturdy resealable plastic bag

Cut a thin slice off the bottom (so the pear will stand upright) and remove 1-inch from the top. Discard the bottom slices and set the tops aside. Core the pears, using a melon baller. Rub the cut sides with the lemon to prevent browning. Squeeze a few drops of juice into the cavities.

Prepare the filling: In a small mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese and brown sugar until fluffy. Stir in the ginger, lemon zest, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, eau de vie, and vanilla extract. Spoon the cheese mixture to one corner of a resealable plastic bag, and snip about 1/2-inch off the corner.

Pipe the filling into the cavities in the pears. (Alternatively, you can use a small spoon to put the filling into the pears.) Loosely place the pear caps on

top. Arrange the pears in the lightly greased aluminum foil pan. The recipe can be prepared up to this stage several hours ahead.

Set up the grill for indirect grilling and preheat to medium. If using a gas grill, place the wood chips in the smoker box or in a smoker pouch and preheat on high until you see smoke, then reduce the heat to medium.

When ready to cook, place the pan with the pears in the center of the hot grate, away from the heat. If using a charcoal grill, toss the wood chips on the coals. Cover the grill and smoke-roast the pears until nicely browned and soft on the sides, 40 minutes to 1 hour. If desired, serve with vanilla or cinnamon ice cream and chopped walnuts.

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