

## **BABY BACK RIBS WITH MAPLE-BOURBON GLAZE**

**Difficulty:** 3/5

**Prep time:** 20 minutes

**Cook time:**

**Serves:** 4 to 6

**Pellet recommendation:** Maple or Apple

### **For the rub and ribs:**

4 tablespoons maple sugar, turbinado sugar, or dark brown sugar  
3 tablespoons kosher salt  
2 tablespoons sweet paprika  
1 tablespoon dry mustard powder, such as Colman's  
1 tablespoon lemon pepper  
2 teaspoons granulated garlic  
2 racks baby back pork ribs (about 5 pounds total)  
1 cup apple juice in a food-safe spray bottle

### **For the Maple-Bourbon Glaze:**

1 cup real maple syrup, preferably Grade B  
1/4 cup ketchup  
1/4 cup maple sugar or dark brown sugar  
2 to 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar  
2 tablespoons bourbon or apple juice  
1 tablespoon Dijon-style or yellow mustard  
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce  
2 teaspoons soy sauce  
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or more to taste

Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil for easier cleanup-up and set aside.

Make the rub: In a small mixing bowl, combine the maple sugar, salt, paprika, mustard powder, lemon pepper, and granulated garlic. Mix with your fingers or a small whisk to break up any lumps.

If your butcher has not already done so, remove the thin papery membrane from the bone-side of the ribs by working the tip of a butter knife or a screwdriver underneath the membrane over a middle bone. Use paper towels to get a firm grip, then tear the membrane off.

Lay the ribs on the prepared baking sheet and sprinkle generously with the rub. (You probably won't need all of it; store the remainder in a resealable plastic bag.)

Make the glaze: In a small saucepan, combine the maple syrup, ketchup, maple sugar, cider vinegar, bourbon, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, and cayenne pepper. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, whisking to mix. Reduce the heat to medium and let the glaze simmer until syrupy. Taste, and add more vinegar or cayenne if desired. The glaze should be sweet, but still have some tang and a little bit of heat. Keep warm.

When ready to cook, start the Traeger grill on Smoke with the lid open until the fire is established (4 to 5 minutes). Set the temperature to 325 degrees F and preheat, lid closed, for 10 to 15 minutes.

Arrange the ribs on the grill grate, meat-side up, or arrange them in a rib rack. Cook for 2 to 2-1/2 hours, spraying with apple juice every 30 minutes, or until they are nearly tender. Brush the ribs with the Maple-Bourbon Glaze and cook for 30 minutes more.

When the ribs are done, transfer them to a cutting board and brush again with the glaze. Let them rest for a few minutes before cutting into half slabs or individual ribs. Serve the remaining glaze on the side.