

Oakland-Style Barbecue Sauce

Having spent nearly 20 years living in the San Francisco Bay Area, I became very fond of the barbecue sauces used for chicken, pork and beef ribs (and other meats) in numerous restaurants there, especially Everett and Jones barbecue establishments in Oakland. The sauce is "booming."

The restaurants don't like to divulge their secrets, but you can find "Oakland style" sauces by searching recipes on the internet. This is one I have made several times.

Making this recipe takes approximately 90 minutes, but works best if you do the preparation and mixing, let the sauce stand covered and refrigerated overnight, and then completed. In this recipe, I have indicated my personal choices for customizing to taste.

Ingredients

2 tbsp. vegetable oil (I substitute 2 tbsp. 100% organic coconut oil)
2 cups finely chopped onions
1 cup finely chopped celery
1/2 cup finely chopped carrots
3 tbsp. chopped garlic (fresh cloves are best, but minced garlic in jars works fine too)
1/4 tsp. salt (I substitute A. Vogel's Herbamare seasoning)
2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 cup red wine (any vintage will do)
6 cups beef stock (I use ones with a low salt content)
2 cups catsup (I use Hunt's catsup, containing no high fructose corn syrup)
1/3 cup Worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup soy sauce (I recommend the low-sodium version)
3 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1-2 tsp. Liquid Smoke (I use applewood flavor though hickory flavor also works well)
1/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
3 tbsp. dry mustard, preferably Colman's
2 tsp. dried thyme
1 tsp. dried oregano
1-2 tsp. cayenne pepper (optional) If you prefer "spicier" sauce, use 2 tsp.
4 bay leaves
1/4 tsp. Tabasco or other hot sauce (I use Mc. Ilhenny Co. Buffalo version)

Instructions

Heat oil in a large, heavy saucepan over medium heat. Add onions, celery, carrots, garlic, salt and pepper. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are soft and beginning to color (approximately 10-15 minutes).

Add wine, bring to a boil and let boil for 2-3 minutes.

Add all other ingredients except Tabasco sauce, and stir until well blended. Reduce heat to simmer, and cook uncovered for 45 minutes to one hour, or until sauce has thickened but can still be poured. Add a bit of water if it seems too thick.

Taste the sauce for salt and pepper, and add Tabasco sauce or other hot sauce to taste (Based on experience, I just add 1/4 tsp. without tasting). Remove bay leaves.

This sauce may be stored in a refrigerator, covered, for up to 30 days. (If you like to barbecue, it will be used within 21 days).

Additional instructions based on experience

After the sauce has cooled, store covered in the refrigerator overnight. After 12 hours, bring sauce to a boil for 10 minutes, run through a blender for a few minutes, and run through a course strainer. Discard strained solids. The liquid should be thick but easily spreadable with a brush. I use a silicone brush to add to the meat about 3-5 minutes before meat is thoroughly cooked, so as not to overly char the meat. This will be a personal choice, however, as some people like to begin cooking with the meat covered in barbecue sauce.

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