ST. LOUIS PORK RIBS

1. St. Louis vs. Baby Back Ribs

- First, let's clear something up. Baby backs are not from baby pigs! Baby back ribs are cut from where the rib meets the spine after the loin is removed from the pig - they tend to be quite a bit thicker at the spine end.
- The uneven thickness can make for uneven cooking. St. Louis-style spare ribs are the meatiest ribs cut from the belly of the hog after the belly is removed.
- I choose the St. Louis style pork ribs because they are a consistent thickness and there is more fat, leading to great tasting tender meat.

2. Prepare and Season

- **Dry brine** the rack overnight. Ribs benefit quite a bit from dry brining because the meat is so thin - it allows the salt to penetrate from both sides, making it very tender.
- If you are really keen, it is a nice touch to remove the silver skin from the back of the ribs. This skin blocks the salt and seasoning from penetrating from the back of the rack.
- Score the skin along the last bone on the rack and grab an exposed corner of the skin using a paper towel and pull. Might take several tries, but you can do it!
- Seasoning both sides lightly today with Flying Swine all-purpose rub - ideal for pork.
- Preheat smoker to 235°F | 115°C.

3. Easy Doneness Test

- The most frequent question I get when it comes to ribs is - how can I tell when they are done? A meat thermometer does not give a clear reading due to how thin the meat is.
- Here is an easy tip - grab the rack of ribs and pretend you are trying to break the rack in half *gently* - if the meat cracks like in this photo, your rib meat is tender and ready to serve!
- If not back into the smoker my friends - low and slow is the way with pork ribs

4. Tender, Meaty Ribs

- Hot off the smoker after about 4 hours at 235°F | 115°C
- Times will vary with each rack - the only real test is the doneness test outlined in Step 3.
- Beautiful mahogany color, perfectly seasoned pork and amazingly tender!
- I have heard it said that ribs are difficult to cook - not when you cook them this way! The best ribs! Enjoy...

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