SMOKED · ADVANCED

Smoked Beef Short Ribs on the Kamado, 8-9 Hours at 120 °C over Oak

Three bones of beef short rib, salt, pepper and oak smoke at 120-125 °C. Eight or nine hours later the collagen has melted, the bark is dark and the probe slides in like butter.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
40 min	540 min	6	120 °C

Ingredients

- **2 ud** slabs of 3-bone beef short rib, about 1.6-2 kg each
- **30 g** coarse salt
- **3 cda** coarsely ground black pepper
- **1 cda** garlic powder
- **1 cda** sweet paprika (optional)
- **3 cda** mild mustard, as a binder for the rub
- **200 ml** apple cider vinegar cut with water, in a spray bottle
- **4 ud** fist-sized oak or holm-oak chunks
- **1 carga** lump charcoal for a long fire
- **2 ud** sheets of butcher paper (optional)

Method

1 PREP AND SEASON THE RIB

Take the rib out of the fridge 30-40 minutes ahead. Pat it dry, trim any hard fat and remove only the membrane on the bone side. Brush on a thin coat of mustard, mix the salt, pepper, garlic and paprika and cover the whole slab with it. Let it sit while you light the kamado; if you do it the night before, season with salt only and keep it uncovered in the fridge.

2 LIGHT AND STABILISE AT 120-125 °C

Fill the firebox with charcoal, light a single spot and let the fire spread slowly. Bury the oak chunks among the coals, fit the deflector and grate and close the lid with the vents almost closed: bottom vent open a couple of fingers and the top vent at half. Allow 30-45 minutes for the chamber to settle at 120-125 °C and the smoke to thin out. Adjust in small steps: the ceramic is slow to react.

3 ADD THE MEAT AND THE PROBE

With gloves on, open by burping the lid: lift it about 5 cm, wait about 5 seconds, then open fully with your face turned away. Insert the probe into the thickest part of the first slab without touching bone and set the slabs meat-side up on the grate, over the deflector. Close and recover 120-125 °C. Note the time: from here it is 8-9 hours, but doneness rules, not the clock.

4 SMOKE AND FIRST BARK

For the first 3-4 hours keep the lid shut: read the temperature on the thermometer and the probe. After that, if the surface looks dry, spray the vinegar-water mix on the darkest areas, always opening with burping and gloves. If the chamber climbs past 130 °C, close the bottom vent a little more; if it drops below 115 °C, open it half a finger. Do not add chunks mid-cook: you would have to lift out meat, grate and deflector, and late smoke turns bitter.

5 THE STALL AND OPTIONAL WRAP

Around 65-75 °C internal the climb stops for hours: that is the stall. If the crust is firm and mahogany-coloured, you can wrap each slab tightly in two turns of butcher paper and return it to the grate pushing the probe back through the paper into the thickest part. Unwrapped it also gets there, just with more waiting. Do not raise the fire to shorten it.

6 CHECK DONENESS BY PROBE

From 93 °C internal start checking. The meat is ready when the probe goes in between the ribs and into the centre with almost no resistance, usually around 93-96 °C; if it still feels tight, wait another 30-45 minutes and test again. For a whole cut of beef this size, tenderness and time sit well above the minimum safe temperature, so there is no need to worry about falling short on degrees.

7 REST, WRAPPED

With gloves and both hands, lift the slabs out, wrap them if they were not already and rest them 45-60 minutes in a warm place, covered with a thick cloth. Close both vents fully to put out the coals and save the remaining charcoal. The long rest is part of the recipe: cut earlier and the meat bleeds juice.

8 SLICE AND SERVE

Cut between the bones with a long knife and serve each rib with its crust, a little flaky salt and strong mustard, pickles or a sharp cabbage slaw. Pour the juices left in the paper or tray over the top. Leftovers keep well covered and are reheated with a splash of stock.

Editor's tips

- Season with more salt than seems right: a slab this thick needs salt to carry flavour to the centre. Coarse salt and coarse pepper in similar parts give a marked crust that is not bitter.

- If the crust looks black too early, that is not a bad sign by itself; it is pepper and fat. A thick white smoke is the bad sign: see the guide to bitter smoke and creosote and let the fire breathe.
- This is a cook of over eight hours: check the charcoal level before starting and do not keep opening up. If you cook after dark, a light fixed to the handle lets you read the thermometer and the smoke without a torch in your hand.
- Every opening with a hot chamber risks flashback: always burp the lid, lift it about 5 cm, wait about 5 seconds and open fully with your face turned away.

Gear for this recipe

Kamado Bono Media 51 cm

A three-bone rib takes up a lot of room: the Kamado Bono Media is 51 cm according to its listing, room for two slabs over the deflector, which comes in its six-accessory bundle. Its 70-400 °C range comfortably covers the 120-125 °C this recipe needs. Honest drawback: it is not a premium brand with official European spares, and over 8-9 hours you still have to watch charcoal and vents; with two slabs, swap them round halfway to even out the heat.

mikamado.es/en/kamados/kamado-bono-media-51

Orework Spanish Holm Oak Charcoal 15 kg

Orework is Spanish holm-oak charcoal (Quercus ilex) produced in Cáceres. Holm oak is a dense hardwood with a long burn and a subtle aroma, which suits an 8-9 hour low-temperature fire without heavy ash or strong flavour. Drawback: it is charcoal, not smoke wood, and does not give as much smoke as chunks, so you still need smoking wood for the profile.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/orework-encina-espanola-15kg

Fiskars X7-XS: 35.5 cm small axe for fine wood

To split oak or holm-oak chunks to fit the firebox, the Fiskars X7-XS is a small hatchet of 35.5 cm and about 640 g, with a fibreglass-reinforced plastic handle and a sheath included; the listing rates it for branches up to 7 cm in diameter. It is comfortable for chunks and fine kindling. Drawback: it is not a woodcutter's axe, and thick or very dry logs are better left to a heavier one.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/fiskars-hacha-pequena-x7-xs

ThermoPro TempSpike TP961: 150 m wireless Bluetooth probe

On an 8-9 hour cook the TempSpike TP961 (TempPro brand, formerly ThermoPro) reads both the meat's internal temperature (up to 100 °C) and the chamber temperature (up to 300 °C) with a single wireless probe and 150 m Bluetooth 5.2, and alerts through the app. It is water resistant (IP67) and the booster takes 2 AAA batteries. Drawback: the internal sensor tops out at 100 °C, just above the 95 °C of this recipe, and with two slabs a single probe only watches one: put it in the thicker slab.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/thermopro-tempspike-tp961-inalambrico

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Rösle 25448: universal LED light for the lid handle

With eight or nine hours ahead, part of the cook falls after dark. The Rösle universal LED light attaches to the lid handle with a silicone strap and offers two brightness levels for reading the thermometer, the smoke and the meat without a torch. Drawback: it needs 3 AAA batteries not included and the listing gives about 4 hours of run time, so keep spare batteries and switch it on only when needed.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/rosle-luz-led-universal-barbacoa

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/costillar-ternera-ahumado-short-ribs-kamado

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