

Cleo Coyle's Coffee Ribs

Photos and text (c) by Alice Alfonsi who writes [The Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as Cleo Coyle with her husband, Marc Cerasini.

Coffee? Yes! A quick bath in a few cups of brewed coffee is our secret to making the most amazingly juicy, tender, and flavorful ribs. Why? Most marinades contain some sort of acid—vinegar, lemon or other fruit juice, even alcohol. But too much acid makes meat mushy. (Likewise boiling ribs robs them of flavor and destroys good texture.) But coffee contains just enough acidity to help the tenderizing process, yet preserve the meat's moistness and texture.

There are two more ingredients that help to create spectacular ribs. One is **salt**. It's not only a flavor enhancer, it also breaks down the connective tissues, which creates tenderness. **Sugar** is the final ingredient that helps to evenly brown and caramelize the surface without drying it. Putting it all together, here is our quick and easy, one pan marinade for

making heavenly pork ribs. ~ *Cleo*

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 – 4 pounds pork ribs (baby back or spare ribs)
- 2 – 3 teaspoons coarsely ground sea salt or Kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon white pepper
- 2 – 3 cups (or so) brewed coffee, cooled
- 1 cup (or so) barbeque sauce* with at least one key ingredient (*see below)

*KEY INGREDIENT: Your barbeque sauce will provide the third secret to great ribs—some form of sugar, which promotes the caramelization of the meat's surface. So look for a BBQ sauce that contains one of the following: sugar, brown sugar, molasses, corn syrup, or honey.



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Shot in the Dark
A Coffeehouse Mystery
by Cleo Coyle

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(1) Right out of the refrigerator, the cold ribs should be placed into a large pan and sprinkled with half of the salt and pepper on all sides. Separate ¼ cup of your BBQ sauce and rub all over the ribs.

(2) Add the cooled brewed coffee to the pan (as shown above, enough for the rib rack's bottom to be soaking in it), cover with cling wrap and marinate at room temperature for one hour. At the thirty minute mark, flip the ribs to coat evenly. Do not marinate for longer than 1 hour.

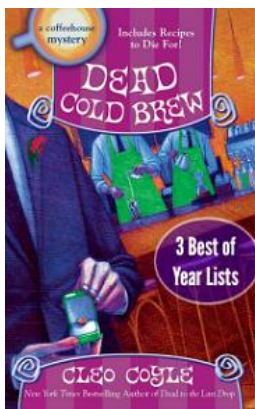
(3) Preheat oven to 350° F. Place a grilling rack over a roasting pan (as shown in my photo). Coat your grilling rack with nonstick spray. Remove ribs from marinade, and discard the liquid. Do not rinse the ribs. Once again, you salt and pepper both sides, then place ribs on the grilling rack, fat side up.



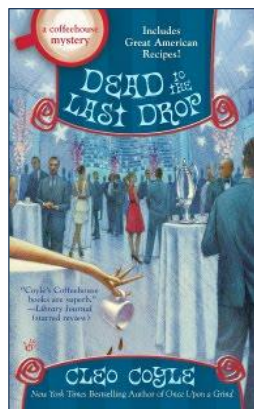
Cooking process (total time 90 to 100 minutes):

- 1 - Cook for 20 minutes, fat side up, and flip.
- 2 - Cook for 20 more minutes, fat side down
- 3 - Flip ribs over (fat side up again), paint with BBQ sauce, and cook for a third 20 minute period.
- 4 - Flip the ribs again, paint with sauce, and continue cooking for a fourth 20 minute period.
- 5 - Flip one more time (fat side up) and apply the rest of your sauce.

Kick up the oven to 375° F. and cook 10 to 20 minutes more. Many pit masters advise that correctly cooked pork ribs *should not* have meat falling off the bone (don't shoot the messenger, but this means they're over-cooked). When you take a bite, the meat should come off with a slight tug, leaving a clean bone. The meat should be tender and juicy with a gentle chew (like a good steak). After the ribs are done, let them rest for 15 minutes before cutting to allow juices inside the meat to re-collect, and...



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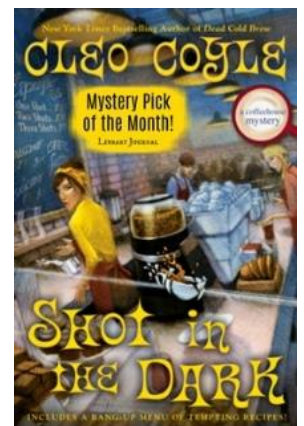


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Eat with joy! ~ Cleo

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