

# TAILGATER

YOUR PARKING LOT & BACKYARD ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

March/April 2016

## EAT



## FIRE UP THE GRILL

COMPILED BY BETH ANTHONY

By smoking chicken with a flavorful rub, you elevate an everyday dinner to amazing. I prepare this simply and concentrate on getting a good texture and appearance.  
—MELISSA COOKSTON

### Perfect Smoked Chicken

Excerpted from *Melissa Cookston's Smokin' in the Boys' Room*. Copyright © 2014 by Melissa Cookston.

Serves: 4 to 6

- 1 4-pound whole chicken
- 3 tablespoons Ultimate BBQ Rub, recipe follows
- 1/2 cup BBQ Mother Sauce, recipe follows

**PREPARE** a smoker to cook at 250°F with 2 to 3 chunks of apple or cherry wood. (I prefer apple for chicken.)

**USING KITCHEN SHEARS**, cut the chicken in half lengthwise and remove excess skin and fat. Sprinkle the rub over both sides of the chicken, then place the chicken in the smoker to cook for 2 1/2 hours, or until the thigh registers 175°F on a meat thermometer. Remove from the smoker and lightly brush with the sauce, then place back in the smoker for 10 minutes to tighten up the sauce. Remove from the smoker and serve.

**Ultimate BBQ Rub** Makes about 6 1/2 cups

- 1 cup turbinado sugar
- 5 cups Basic BBQ Rub, recipe follows
- 1/4 cup light chili powder
- 1/4 cup granulated garlic
- 1 teaspoon cayenne

**PLACE** the turbinado sugar in a clean coffee grinder and pulse until lightly powdered. Transfer to a large mixing bowl. (You may have to work in batches.) Add the rub, chili powder, granulated garlic and cayenne, and stir until well incorporated. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 months.

**Basic BBQ Rub** Makes about 2 3/4 cups

- 1 cup turbinado sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 cup kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 2 tablespoons granulated garlic
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cayenne
- 1 teaspoon finely ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1/4 cup light chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons paprika

**PLACE** the turbinado sugar in a coffee grinder and pulse until lightly powdered. Transfer to a small mixing bowl and add the granulated sugar, salt, onion powder, granulated garlic, cayenne, black pepper, dry mustard, chili powder, cumin, and paprika. Stir until well incorporated. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

**BBQ Mother Sauce** Makes about 6 1/2 cups

- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 3/4 cup finely diced sweet or yellow onion
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 1 1/2 cups ketchup
- 1/2 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons packed dark brown sugar
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup water, or as needed
- 1/2 cup Basic BBQ Rub or Ultimate BBQ Rub, or to taste

**IN A MEDIUM SAUCEPAN**, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté until translucent, about 5 minutes. Turn the heat to low if the onion is cooking too fast—you don't want it caramelized or browned. As the onion is getting close, add the garlic and cook until lightly golden, about 2 minutes longer. Add the ketchup, honey, tomato paste, vinegar, brown sugar, Worcestershire, dry mustard, cayenne and black pepper, and stir well. Slowly add water until the sauce reaches the consistency you like. A slightly thick consistency is best. Add about 3 tablespoons of the rub, stir well, and taste. The sauce should have a good, well-rounded flavor. Add more rub in 1-tablespoon increments until your desired flavor is achieved. Cool and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 10 days.