

CSA Package Contents:

- 1 slap spare ribs
- 1 pint homemade BBQ sauce
- 1 lb stew beef
- 1 bag mixed salad greens
- 3 lbs potatoes
- 2 lbs white spelt flour
- 2 lbs frozen sweet corn
- 1 package Italian Sausage links

Spareribs vs Baby Back

Just to be clear, baby back ribs don't come from baby hogs. I, and most of the butchers I know, prefer a spare rib to a baby back. The spare rib bones are spaced further apart and have more meat and fat between them. On a hog, the rib cage starts at the spine (top of the pig) and ends at the belly. On either side of the spine, on the outside of the rib, is the loin. This is where pork chops come from. Beneath the loin is where the baby back ribs come from.

To get baby back ribs, the butcher removes the loin (boneless loin chops or boneless loin roast). He cuts the ribs out by cutting the hog at the neck bones (where country style ribs come from) and before the sirloin (right after the rib cage ends). He then cuts the chime bone off (spine) and slices the ribs in half with a bandsaw. The smaller portion, closest to the spine, is the baby back ribs.

The remaining portion is the spare ribs. Some people then cut them into "St Louis Style Ribs." This is where the butcher removes the sternum bone (which is the fattiest piece, closest to the belly). This is also known as the rib-tip section. To make your ribs st-louis style ribs, I suggest going to the web and looking for a video. I'll link one on our blog page. I found this video at you-tube by searching "trimming spare ribs."

Slowcooked Spare Ribs

Clark Pope, mastermind behind your BBQ sauce, has a simple recipe for your spare ribs. Start by placing your ribs on two pieces of aluminum foil, large enough to wrap them completely. Preheat oven to 400.

Mix a dry rub. Clark's suggested rub is: 0.5 tsp garlic powder, 0.5 tsp onion powder, 0.25 tsp ground thyme, 0.5 tsp cayenne pepper, 0.25 tsp black pepper, 0.5 tsp cumin, and 4 tablespoons brown sugar.

Rub the ribs with the seasonings. Move the ribs and foil to a cookie sheet. Fold the foil up to make a canoe around the ribs. Pour a quarter cup to third cup of apple cider vinegar over the ribs. Crimp the foil together over the ribs (loosely) and bake for 75 to 90 minutes. The meat will pull back slightly from the ends of the bones and the juices will be clear. Brush with Pope BBQ sauce and serve.

Creamed Corn

I've always been grossed out by the canned creamed corn, so I decided to figure out how to make it myself. Thank goodness someone else figured this out first. Eat this as is, or use it in the gratin recipe listed next (if you make the gratin, you will need to scale this recipe back to reserve sweet corn for the gratin recipe).

Ingredients are:

- 2 lbs sweet corn kernels
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup milk, preferably not skim
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- Black pepper, about 0.25 teaspoon
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 to 3 tablespoons flour, adjust as needed based on liquid content of corn
- Optional: 0.25 cup grated dry cheese, grated parmesan or Fresh Fork houtz or gouda

In a medium saucepan, melt butter and whisk in the flour over medium heat. Don't burn the butter/flour. As it starts to foam, add the corn kernels, cream, salt, sugar, and pepper. Cook slowly, stirring often. It will thicken up some. In a separate bowl, mix another tablespoon of flour with the cup of milk. Add the milk and cook slowly until the entire mixture has thickened. As it starts to thicken, add the cheese, stir, and remove from heat. Serve hot or use in the gratin recipe below.

Sweet Corn and Potato Gratin

My ma found this recipe in Healthy Cooking magazine and has recommended it. This is one recipe we don't disagree on.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, sliced thin and quartered
- 2 tablespoons butter and 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup milk, 2% or whole
- 2 pounds potatoes, sliced thinly
- 2 cups frozen corn, drained
- 1 cup creamed corn
- 0.75 cups bread crumbs
- 1 melted tablespoon butter

In a large saucepan, sauté the onions in butter until tender. Approx 3 minutes over medium high heat. Stir in the flour, garlic, salt, and pepper. Slowly add the milk, stirring. Add the potato slices and bring the mixture to a slow boil. Reduce the heat some and cook the potatoes until they start to get tender. Add more milk if anything starts to stick.

Add the sweet corn and creamed corn. Grease a medium sized ceramic or glass baking dish with melted butter. Layer the potato mixture in. In a separate bowl, combine melted butter and bread crumbs. Coat the top of the mixture with the bread crumbs and bake for 45 minutes at 350 degrees.

Sweet Corn Pierogies

If you lack patience...get a friend to help you here and drink lots of wine.

Dough: 4 cups flour, 3 tablespoons canola oil, 2 eggs, 1 teaspoon salt, and approx 1 cup warm water

Mix your flour and salt. Add the oil and two eggs into the mixture and mix together. Add the water slowly and mix by hand. Keep adding water until dough is slightly tacky, but not wet. You may need more than a cup of water. You really have to do it based on feel. Wrap the dough in plastic and refrigerate for a few hours.

Filling: Peel and slice your potatoes. Cook in boiling water until tender. Smash and whip with a mixture salt and pepper. Cook your sweet corn in a saucepan. Add sweet corn, based on how much corn you want in your potato mixture. Whip it together with the potatoes. Add whipping cream or milk and continue to whip until desired consistency.

Roll out the dough on a floured surface with a floured rolling pin. Cut the dough with an upside down tumbler. Roll the circle out, stretch with fingers and stuff the pierogie. Pinch the edges together and boil the pierogies in salted water until they float.

Cooking your perogies: I prefer to pan fry my pierogies to finish them. Get a heavy bottom skillet hot with canola oil or butter. Pan fry until each side is slightly golden brown. Serve immediately.

Sweet Corn Potato Salad

This one will take you back to summer some. You can serve it either cold or warm. The dressing in this one is courtesy of Jamie B, who sent me a recipe earlier in the year for a no-mayo coleslaw that has changed my life. (search the fresh fork blog for that recipe, Russian cabbage salad)

Wash and coarsely chop your potatoes. You want the pieces to be about the same size so they cook evenly. I like mine about nickel to quarter sized.

Toss the potatoes with some olive oil. Season with salt and pepper and roast in the oven at 375 until tender on the inside and slightly crispy on the outside. About 35 minutes. On that same cookie sheet, try coating a thick slice of onion with olive oil and roasting.

In a small mixing bowl, whisk together 2 to 3 tablespoons honey, 3 tablespoon apple cider vinegar, and 2 tablespoons olive oil.

Cook the sweet corn in a saucepan. The corn is very tender so this won't take long. Drain the corn, in a bowl mix the potatoes, corn, onion (cut into smaller pieces), and dressing. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

If doing a cold salad, let the corn and potatoes chill before combining ingredients. Then refrigerate for a few hours to let the flavors soak in. I'd serve it chilled rather than warm.