

FOOD & DINING

Wings to make any barbecue fan blush

Chicken wings are beloved by people of all ages and appetites. While many people only eat wings when out on the town, this lovable bar food can be enjoyed at home as well. The next time the big game is on or you simply have a hunger for homemade wings, try your hand at the following recipe for “Virgil’s Smoked Chicken Wings With Blue Cheese Dip” from Neal Corman’s “Virgil’s Barbecue Road Trip Cookbook” (St. Martin’s Press).

VIRGIL’S SMOKED CHICKEN WINGS WITH BLUE CHEESE DIP

Serves 4

BLUE CHEESE DIP

- 2 cups blue cheese crumbles, divided
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 2 teaspoons hot sauce
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 cup finely chopped scallions
- 1/4 cup finely chopped celery

MARINADE

- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup hot sauce
- 4 tablespoons Virgil’s Dry Rub (see below)
- 4 tablespoons granulated garlic
- 4 tablespoons granulated onion
- Juice of 1/2 lemon

WINGS

- 8 large chicken wings
- 1/2 cup Virgil’s Dry Rub (see below)

SAUCE

- 10 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 4 tablespoons white vinegar
- 3/4 cup hot sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1. To make the dip, combine 1 cup of the blue cheese, mayonnaise, buttermilk, hot sauce, Worcestershire sauce, and salt in the bowl of a food processor and blend on low until smooth.
2. Remove to a medium mixing bowl and fold in the rest of the blue cheese, scallions and celery, being sure to break up the larger blue cheese crumbles. Place in a covered container and refrigerate overnight.
3. Mix all the marinade ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Place the wings in a large container with a lid and pour the mixture over the wings. Toss until the wings are thoroughly coated. Cover and refrigerate for 2 days.
4. Preheat the grill or smoker to 245 F.
5. Spread out the wings on a sheet pan and wipe away any excess marinade. Sprinkle liberally with the dry rub, coating the wings all over.
6. Position the wings on the grill away from the direct heat of the coals or burners, and add hickory to the smoker or hickory chips on the coals or gas burners.
7. Cook the wings for about 3 hours, flipping every 30 minutes (their internal temperature

should be about 165 F when cooked).

8. While the wings are cooking, cut the butter for the sauce into 1-inch cubes and refrigerate. Whisk the cornstarch into the white vinegar, in a small bowl.

9. In a medium sauté pan over medium heat, bring the hot sauce to a simmer and whisk in the thickened vinegar. Return to a simmer, cook for 1 minute, and remove from the heat.

10. Add the cayenne and slowly whisk in the cold butter. Keep warm until serving.

11. Remove the wings from the smoker or grill and put half of them into a bowl, cover with the sauce, and toss. Repeat with the remaining wings and serve on a platter, with the blue cheese dip on the side.

VIRGIL’S DRY RUB

Makes 5 to 5 1/2 cups

- 2 1/2 cups sweet paprika
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup Texas-style chili powder
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 1/2 cup granulated garlic
- 1/4 cup dried parsley flakes
- 6 tablespoons kosher salt

Combine all of the ingredients in a medium bowl and whisk together until completely incorporated. Transfer to a covered bowl with a tight-fitting lid. Store in a cool, dry place.



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