

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25-30 minutes

Total time: 35-40 minutes

Table of Contents



- [Ingredients](#)
- [Instructions](#)
- [Recipe Intensities & Timings](#)
- [The Last of the Recipe: Serving & Storage](#)
- [Nutrition Information](#)

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 3 fresh jalapeño peppers, finely diced (seeds and membranes included for more heat; remove for a milder sauce)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can (12 oz) cherry cola (not diet)
- 1 cup ketchup

- ½ cup packed brown sugar
 - 3 tbsp apple cider vinegar
 - 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
 - 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
 - 1 tsp smoked paprika
 - ½ tsp salt
 - ¼ tsp black pepper
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Instructions

1. Sauté the Aromatics: In a medium saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the diced jalapeños and cook for 3-4 minutes until they begin to soften. Add the minced garlic and cook for another 30 seconds until fragrant. Be careful not to burn the garlic.
2. Build the Sauce: Pour in the cherry cola and stir, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Bring the mixture to a simmer and let it reduce for about 5-7 minutes, or until the liquid has halved. This step is crucial for concentrating the cherry flavor.

- 3. **Combine and Simmer:** Add the ketchup, brown sugar, apple cider vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, Dijon mustard, smoked paprika, salt, and pepper. Stir well to combine all the ingredients.
- 4. **Reduce to a Glaze:** Bring the sauce to a gentle boil, then immediately reduce the heat to low. Let it simmer uncovered for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. The sauce is ready when it has thickened enough to coat the back of a spoon.
- 5. **Blend (Optional):** For a smooth, professional-looking sauce, carefully transfer the mixture to a blender and pulse until smooth. For a more rustic texture, you can skip this step.
- 6. **Cool and Store:** Remove the sauce from the heat and let it cool completely. Transfer to a sealed jar or bottle and store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Recipe Intensities & Timings

This guide breaks down the cooking process by heat level and duration, giving you a clear roadmap for execution.

Phase	Intensity Level	Time	Description & Visual Cues
Aromatics Sauté	Medium	3-4 minutes	Jalapeños should be sizzling gently and softening, not browning. The garlic should be fragrant.
Cola Reduction	Medium-Simmer	5-7 minutes	A steady stream of small bubbles should rise to the surface. The liquid volume will visibly decrease.

Phase	Intensity Level	Time	Description & Visual Cues
Initial Boil	High	1 minute	A rolling boil across the entire surface. This is a quick step to kickstart the reduction.
Glaze Simmer	Low	15-20 minutes	The sauce should be barely bubbling (a lazy simmer). Stir every few minutes. Finished sauce will be thick and glossy.

The Last of the Recipe: Serving & Storage

This sauce is more than just a marinade; it's a finishing tool.

- As a Glaze: Brush it onto chicken, ribs, or pork chops during the last 5-10 minutes of grilling. The sugars will caramelize and create a beautiful, sticky crust. Be vigilant, as it can burn quickly over high heat.
 - As a Dipping Sauce: Serve it on the side with grilled sausages, burger patties, or even sweet potato fries.
 - Storage: Keep in a sterilized glass jar or airtight container in the refrigerator. It will keep for up to 2 weeks. The flavors will deepen and the heat may become more pronounced after a day or two.
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Nutrition Information

Serving Size: 2 tablespoons

Please note: This is an estimate. Nutritional values can vary based on specific brands of ingredients used.

- Calories: 55
 - Total Fat: 1g
 - Saturated Fat: 0.1g
 - Sodium: 180mg
 - Total Carbohydrates: 12g
 - Dietary Fiber: 0.2g
 - Total Sugars: 10g
 - Protein: 0.4g
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