Homemade Barbecue Sauce

Yields: 2 ¼ cups

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups canned tomatoes
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 T. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 T. Dijon mustard
- 1 T. pure maple syrup
- 1 T. honey

Directions:

1. Place tomatoes, onion and garlic in a food processor or blender. Blend until smooth.
2. Add tomato mixture to a medium sized pot and add remaining ingredients. Whisk well to mix. Heat over high heat until sauce starts bubbling vigorously whisking occasionally. Reduce heat to low and simmer for about 10 minutes.

When you think about what you typically eat in the day, do you recall the sauces and toppings too? Condiments can be a sneaky source of "hidden" calories because they're often not taken into account when people consider the nutritional value of food. For instance, you may have just eaten toast for breakfast, but you may have also added a couple hundred calories of butter to it, as well. A squirt of mayonnaise on your sandwich, a dollop of sour cream on your baked potato, a drizzle of honey on your yogurt—it all adds up.

Condiments can really add a lot of flavor to a meal, but some of them may also add a hefty dose of unwanted calories, fat, sugar, and salt. The calories in fatty condiments such as gravies and dressings and the hidden sugar content in some condiments such as barbecue sauce can add up quickly. Some condiments, such as soy sauce, can easily take you over your daily sodium limit with just a tablespoon or two. While it's not necessary to avoid condiments altogether, we should use them wisely to enhance the flavor of our food.

To pack in extra flavor without adding high levels of fat, sodium and sugar remember the following:

- Control your portions. It can be easy to slather on more than one serving. Remember condiments are meant to enhance the flavor, not drown it out. Use just the amount you need to enhance the taste.
- Try low-fat, low-sugar, and low-sodium versions of your favorite condiments. Many foods in the grocery aisles now offer healthier alternatives to their original products. If you tend to pile on the condiments, you may want to swap out your sauces and toppings in order to cut out unwanted fat, salt and sugar.
- Taste before you add. Many times we tend to add condiments to foods even before tasting. Those foods may already taste good when well-prepared and properly seasoned.

For healthier alternatives to top your favorite foods with try:

- Salsa—salsa is usually a low calorie food. It is even low in sodium if made fresh.
- Hot sauce—this is usually made from just vinegar and spices. Very little is need to add lots of flavor and a bite to your favorite dishes.
- Mustard—low in calories and a lower fat alternative to mayonnaise for sandwiches.
- Guacamole—while avocados are fairly high in calories, they are abundant in heart healthy fats, making it a good creamy alternative.
- Olive oil and vinegar—olive oil has a lot of calories, too, but again contains heart-healthy fats and is a good alternative to other salad dressing high is unhealthy fats.

This barbecue sauce recipe is very low in sugar. It's lightly sweetened with maple syrup and honey. It can add a lot of flavor to slow-cooked or grilled meats. A ¼ cup serving contains only 4 grams of added sugar, while most major brands of barbecue sauce have 24-28 grams of sugar per ¼ cup!