

BRAISED BEEF SHORT RIBS

Who knows how long the supply chain will allow us to continue buying meat, but as long as you can find beef short ribs, or beef chuck roast, we can braise our worries away. I have always loved beef short ribs, braised until the meat is fall off the bone tender. Another reason I love them is they are a great dinner party dish (remember dinner parties?) because they are best made the day before and re-heated the next day after some of the fat is removed after chilling. For this recipe, I use a combination of beef short ribs and boneless beef chuck. The ribs have the bone and tendon which release collagen while cooking that make a nice rich gravy; the chuck is just a meatier cut. You can use all ribs or all chuck or a combination of both. This braised beef is wonderful with polenta (see episode 1), or on a grilled hunk of sourdough bread. You could also shred it into taco worthy pieces or serve alongside mashed root vegetables as we do here in episode 3. This recipe yields so much meat, you'll be able to enjoy it every which way all week long!

COOKING
À LA Lala



BRAISED BEEF À LA LALA

2 lbs. beef short ribs	2-3 medium yellow or white onions, halved	1/2 c. apple cider vinegar
2 lbs. boneless beef chuck	2 heads of garlic halved cross-wise	1/2 c. soy sauce
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper	3 T. honey	4 c. beef, chicken or vegetable broth
3 T. canola or vegetable oil		Several thyme sprigs

Season the beef very generously with salt and pepper and let sit at room temp for an hour or covered in the fridge for up to 48 hours. Preheat your oven to 350.

Heat the oil on medium high in a very large dutch oven and add the season meat to brown. You'll probably need to do this in batches so as not to crowd. Get some nice brown color on as much of the meat as you can—about 3-4 minutes a side. Remove the meat from the dutch oven and put on a platter to the side.

Pour off all but 3 T. of fat and place the pot back on medium high heat. Add the onion and garlic cut side down and cook, undisturbed for 3-4 minutes until very fragrant and they develop a nice, brown color.

Add the honey, it will bubble vigorously and darken a bit. Add the vinegar and soy and let thicken over same medium high heat, while stirring and scraping up the bits sticking to the bottom of the pan. Now, add the stock and bring to a simmer.

Now, add in the browned meat and thyme sprigs. Add some more broth or water if the meat is not completely covered with liquid.

Cook in the preheated oven for 3 1/2 -4 hours.

Remove the dutch oven and check to see if the ribs, if using are falling away from the meat, and the chuck, if using can be torn apart with two forks. If not quite there, put it back in at 300 for another hour. When the meat has finished cooking, remove to another container and strain the liquid over the meat, pressing on solids to get all the flavor from the onion and garlic. Cover and chill overnight.

When ready to serve, remove the fat that has congealed on top. There will still be plenty of lovely fat in the dish; removing this top layer will keep it from being greasy. Return to the dutch oven or another oven proof dish to re-heat at 300 for about an hour.

Your braised beef is ready to enjoy topped with some of its delicious braising liquid!

GREENS, GREENS!

I'm afraid you could have called me a picky eater as a child. I picked cookies and candies. Well, I got better. Now, I'll choose a bowl of greens sautéed with garlic over a GooGoo cluster any day of the week. Luckily, the grocery stores still seem to have fresh greens aplenty (it's the frozen spinach that's hard to come by-go figure). Fearing this plenitude might not be the case we planted a lot of greens in our garden in early March and we are happily and literally reaping the harvest now. Lots of beautiful Kale, spinach and turnips-whose tender tops are heavenly; never throw them out when your priority is the turnip root. Remember, greens cook down to a small fraction of their uncooked volume, so don't be shy about adding an obscene amount to your pot. You can use any fat to start: vegetable oil, olive oil, bacon fat or of course SCHMALTZ! We are garlic fiends, but if you are not, use shallot or onion. We enjoy a bit of heat so we toss in a generous amount of red pepper flakes. The important thing is to use the ingredients you like as supporting players to your regal greens. I like to place a crown of lemon juice to finish and I always go back for seconds!

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SAUTEED GREENS À LA LALA

10-12 c. winter greens such as Kale, Turnip or Spinach or a combination, cleaned and chopped

2 T. schmaltz or any fat of your liking
4 cloves of garlic, peeled and chopped

1/2 t. Red pepper flakes (optional)
1 c. Chicken stock (or wine or water)
Lemon juice for finishing

Heat the fat over medium high heat in a very large saute pan or a deep pot.

When the fat has melted and is bubbly or shimmering add the garlic and cook until golden, but not brown. Toss in the pepper flakes.

Add the greens in batches if you need to depending on the size of your pan. Add some liquid to help the greens cook/ steam. After all the greens are in add some salt and continue to stir and add liquid as needed.

Cook until the greens are a texture you like. I prefer mine to still have some nice bright green color and a little bit of crunch. You may like yours to cook a bit more. It's up to you. But please don't forget the lemon. I mean it.

MASHED ROOT VEGETABLES

One thing that seems to be still widely available in the grocery stores right now are potatoes, the King of Starches. Aren't we lucky! I love them roasted in schmaltz to a crisp ecstasy or mashed with some warm, butter and cream to make a gravy worthy vessel. We have plenty of turnips in our garden right now, so I figured to get the King and Prince together for this mash and use the turnip greens for a quick saute to round out the meal. I always, always have cream and butter on hand, so I use them for my mashes, but if you want to use sour cream or cream cheese, why not? There are no hard fast rules on this one, so just mash your veg after boiling until tender and add in your goodies until you reach perfection, season with salt and pepper to suit your taste and finish with a sprinkle of fresh, minced chives. Simple, humble, divine!

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MASHED ROOT VEG À LA LALA

1 lb. turnips, washed, trimmed and quartered
1 lb. potatoes (Yukon gold or red new potatoes) peels and quartered
1-2 dried bay leaves
1/4 c. heavy cream

2-3 T. butter
1 T. prepared horseradish or more if you like
Salt and pepper
Minced chives

Put the quartered vegetables in a pot of salted water and bring to a boil. Cook until you can pierce with a knife and have no resistance.

Meanwhile heat the cream and butter in a saucepan or in the microwave until the cream is warm and the butter is melted.

Drain the veg and put back into the pot and add the warm butter and cream, horseradish, if using and mash to the consistency that you like. I like mine with some texture but you may like it smooth. It doesn't matter. Now season with salt and pepper and taste. Adjust as you like.

Ideally, you have some chives to finish with. A mash for the Gods!