



SLOW

RECIPE: BEEF CHEEKS IN RED WINE WITH CREAMY MASHED POTATO

Stanbroke, 2 years ago 4 min read

Nick Lockyer, Executive Chef, Sandstone Point Hotel

When you get them right, beef cheeks melt in your mouth like butter. I've spent time in France, travelling around, visiting the markets and talking to chefs, and I was really inspired by the French approach to cooking. They cook for the love of it, and focus on using quality products. This is a staple dish in France, and is really easy to cook.

Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1.5kg beef cheeks (4 large or 6 small cheeks)
- 1 onion (white, brown or yellow), roughly diced (about 1 cup)
- 1 celery stalk, roughly diced (about 1 cup)
- 1 carrot, roughly diced (about 3/4 cup)
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 fresh thyme stems (or 1 1/2 tsp dried thyme leaves)
- 4 bay leaves, dried (or 3 bay leaves, fresh)
- 1 cup beef stock
- 2 cups red wine
- 2 – 3 tsp salt
- Black pepper

For the mash

- 800g potatoes, peeled and chopped roughly
- 4 tbsp butter
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tsp salt and pepper

Method

For the beef cheeks

Step 1

Cut off any bits of fat on the cheeks and pat dry with kitchen paper. Season all over with salt and pepper.

Step 2

Heat 2 tbsp of the olive oil in a large heavy-based pot – or casserole dish with a lid – on high heat. Sear the beef cheeks on each side until nicely browned. If your pot is not large enough, work in batches rather than crowding the pan. Remove beef cheeks onto a plate, and cover loosely with foil to keep warm.

Step 3

Turn down the heat to medium and heat the remaining 1 tbsp of olive oil. Add garlic, onion and carrots. Sauté for 3 minutes until the onion is becoming transparent, then add the celery and sauté for a further 3 minutes.

Step 4

Pour the wine into the pot containing the onion mixture, and stir, scraping the brown bits off the bottom of the pot. Bring to simmer for 1 minute.

Step 5

Add remaining ingredients, starting with a pinch of salt and pepper.

Step 6

Put lid on and cook on the stove on medium to low for 2 to 2 1/2 hours or in the oven at 160C for 3 to 3 1/2 hours until the cheeks are very tender. Turn at least once during cooking.

Step 7

Remove beef cheeks from the pot and remove the thyme stems and bay leaves.

Step 8

Use a handheld stick blender to puree the braising liquid into a smooth sauce. It will change from dark brown to a lighter brown colour.

Step 9

Bring the sauce to simmer over medium heat and simmer until it turns darker brown and reduces by about a quarter into a gravy consistency. This should take 3 to 5 minutes.

Step 10

Do a taste test and add the seasoning (salt and pepper) to your taste.

Step 11

Remove from heat, return beef cheeks to the sauce, and cover to keep warm until ready to serve with the mashed potatoes.

For the mashed potatoes

Step 1

Place potatoes in a large pot of salted boiling water and cook for 10 minutes until very soft.

Step 2

Drain potatoes, then return them to the pot.

Step 3

Add butter and milk and use a potato masher to mash until smooth.

Step 4

Add salt and pepper to taste. Use more milk to adjust the consistency to your liking.