

Red Wine Marinated Braised Short Ribs

<http://userealbutter.com/2009/04/20/braised-beef-short-ribs-recipe/>

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2 large cloves garlic, smashed and peeled
2 large sprigs thyme
2 strips orange zest (1-inch by 3-4 inches)
2 bay leaves
1/4 tsp allspice berries, coarsely crushed
1/4 tsp black peppercorns
4 whole cloves
1 750ml bottle hearty, dry red wine
4-5 lbs. meaty bone-in beef short ribs (English style)
1 1/2 tps kosher salt, more as needed
3 tbsps extra-virgin olive oil
1 large yellow onion, coarsely chopped
1 medium celery stalk, coarsely chopped
1 medium carrot, peeled and coarsely chopped
freshly ground black pepper
2 tbsps tomato paste
2 cups homemade or low-salt beef or chicken broth
2 tbsps red wine vinegar, more to taste

Marinate the ribs: place the garlic, thyme, orange zest, bay leaves, allspice, peppercorns, and cloves in a sachet and tie closed with twine. Pour the wine into a medium saucepan with the sachet and bring to a boil on high heat. Reduce to simmer for 10 minutes. Let cool. Trim excess fat from the top of each rib down to first layer of meat. Don't remove connective tissue. Place ribs in a ziploc bag or a dish large enough to hold them in a single layer and season with 1 1/2 teaspoons of salt. Pour the marinade and sachet over the ribs. Cover with plastic wrap (or seal the bag) and refrigerate for 12 to 24 hours. Turn the ribs a few times.

Cook the ribs: Remove the ribs from the marinade and pat dry. Heat a couple of tablespoons of olive oil in a dutch oven or large heavy pot with lid over medium heat until hot. Add the ribs in single layer with enough room to avoid steaming and sear until nicely browned on all sides (3-4 minutes a side) using tongs to turn them over. Do this until they are all seared. Remove the ribs to a plate and drain off any fat from the pan (there was almost none in my pan) and add one more tablespoon of olive oil to the pan on medium heat. Sauté the vegetables (onion, celery, carrots) and season with salt and pepper until slightly browned (about 8 minutes). Stir in the tomato paste and half of the marinade, raising the heat to high. Try scraping up bits of fond from the bottom of the pan and reduce the liquid to about half (2-4 minutes). Add the rest of the marinade and reduce by half. Add the broth and vinegar, boiling for about 3 minutes. Remove from heat.

Position a rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat to 300°F. Place the ribs in the pot in a single layer along with any juices and the sachet. Crumple a large sheet of parchment and then smooth it out. Place it over the pot and press it down so that it just touches the ribs. Smooth out any overhang allowing it to extend up and over the edge of the pot. Set the lid on top and place the pot in the oven. Braise, turning the ribs with tongs every 45 minutes, until meat is fork-tender and pulling away at the bones. Transfer to a serving dish and cover with foil to keep warm.

The sauce: Strain the braising liquid through a fine mesh sieve into a vessel, pressing liquid out of the solids. Let the liquid cool a little and pour it into a gallon ziploc bag (this is how I did it – they say to spoon the fat off – I hate doing that) and seal. Set a bottom corner of the bag over the vessel and pierce the corner with a sharp knife. Allow the juices to flow into the vessel and then pinch the corner of the bag when only fat remains in the ziploc. Discard the ziploc (hey, it's my favorite kitchen trick). You can reduce the sauce by simmering over medium-high heat in a saucepan if the flavor isn't intense enough. Season as needed and spoon over the ribs to serve.