



ROPA VIEJA

Carne deshebrada a la cubana

90 MIN • ADEPT • LATIN AMERICAN



INGREDIENTS

FOR THE BEEF

- 1.5 lb (680g) top round, thin-sliced (or flank steak or brisket, cooking time will be longer)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp cumin
- 2 tbsp olive oil or avocado oil

SOFRITO AND SAUCE

- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1 green bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small can (6 oz / 170g) tomato paste
- 4 fl oz (120ml) dry white wine
- 8 fl oz (240ml) beef broth
- 1 tsp cumin, 1 tsp smoked paprika, 1 tsp oregano
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 oz (85g) green olives, sliced
- 1 tbsp capers
- Salt to taste

ACCOMPANIMENTS

Optional, the full Cuban plate

- 1 can black beans
- 1/2 yellow onion, finely diced
- 1/2 green bell pepper, finely diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp cumin, 1/2 tsp oregano, 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 ripe plantains (skin mostly black or heavily spotted, not green)
- White rice, 2 cups dry for 3 to 4 servings

INSTRUCTIONS

STAGE 1: SEASON AND SEAR THE BEEF

1. Pat the beef dry with paper towels. Season all over with salt, pepper, and cumin.
2. Heat the oil in a pan over medium-high heat. Sear the beef slices in batches for 2 minutes per side until well browned. Do not crowd the pan, or the meat will steam instead of forming the fragrant, browned crust you want. Set the seared meat aside.
3. The fond left in the pan after searing is flavour. Do not wipe it out.

STAGE 2: BUILD THE SOFRITO

1. Reduce the heat to medium. In the same pan, add the sliced onion and both bell peppers. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until soft and beginning to caramelize at the edges.
2. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
3. Add the tomato paste, oregano, smoked paprika, and cumin. Stir and cook for 2 minutes, letting the paste darken slightly and coat the vegetables. This step deepens the entire flavour base.
4. Pour in the white wine and stir, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Let it bubble for 1 to 2 minutes until the alcohol cooks off.

STAGE 3: BRAISE

1. Return the seared beef to the pan. Pour in the beef broth and add the bay leaves. The liquid should come about halfway up the meat.
2. Cover and simmer on low heat for 40 to 50 minutes, until the beef is very tender and shreds easily with two forks. Because thin-sliced top round is used here, this is faster than the classic method. If using flank steak or brisket cut into thick pieces, plan for 1.5 to 2 hours of braising.
3. Remove the beef from the pan and shred it using two forks, pulling along the grain into long, loose threads. Return the shredded meat to the sauce.

STAGE 4: FINISH AND SERVE

1. Stir in the sliced green olives and capers. Simmer uncovered for 5 more minutes to let the flavours come together and the sauce reduce slightly.
2. Remove the bay leaves and taste for salt. The olives and capers carry plenty of brine, so go easy before you add any more.
3. Serve over white rice, with black beans and fried sweet plantains alongside. A small handful of fresh cilantro over the top is a nice finishing touch if you like it.

STAGE 5: ACCOMPANIMENTS (OPTIONAL)

1. Black beans: heat olive oil in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add the finely diced onion and green bell pepper and cook for 5 to 6 minutes until soft. Add the garlic and spices and stir for 1 minute. Add the black beans straight from the

can with all their liquid, do not drain or rinse. Stir and warm through for 5 to 7 minutes until heated and fragrant. Taste for salt.

2. Sweet plantains: peel the plantains and slice on a diagonal, about 1/2 inch thick. The skin must be mostly black or very heavily spotted. Green or lightly yellow plantains are starchy and will not caramelize. Heat 2 tbsp neutral oil in a pan over medium heat until shimmering and fry the slices in a single layer for 2 to 3 minutes per side until deep golden and caramelized at the edges. Transfer to a paper towel and finish with a pinch of flaky salt.
3. White rice: cook 2 cups (380g) dry long-grain white rice with 3 cups (720ml) water and a pinch of salt. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 18 minutes. Remove from the heat and let it steam, covered, for 5 minutes before fluffing with a fork.

NUTRITIONAL VALUE

Per serving (approx. 250g, beef only, based on 4 servings):

~370 kcal

CALORIES

18g

TOTAL FAT

10g

CARBOHYDRATES

38g

PROTEIN



LANTERN KITCHEN STORIES