



SPANISH (ANDALUSIA)

# Carne Mechada

| COMPLEXITY | SERVES | PREP   | COOK        | TECHNIQUE | CUT          |
|------------|--------|--------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Involved   | 6      | 30 min | 2 hr 30 min | Braise    | Eye of round |

## Ingredients

- 1.2 kg (2½ lb) eye of round, in one piece
- 100 g (3½ oz) serrano ham or bacon, cut into thin sticks (for larding)
- 4 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 tsp salt and 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 1 carrot and 1 leek, chopped
- 120 ml (½ cup) amontillado or dry sherry
- 400 g (14 oz) can crushed tomatoes
- 500 ml (2 cups) beef stock
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 sprig thyme
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley

## Steps

1. Using a thin knife, poke deep slits all along the beef. Push a stick of ham and a slice of garlic into each slit (this is the "mechada", or larding).
2. Rub the beef with salt, pepper and paprika, and let it sit 30 minutes while you prep the vegetables.
3. Heat the oil in a heavy pot over medium-high heat. Sear the beef on all sides for about 10 minutes, until deep brown. Move to a plate.
4. Lower the heat to medium and cook the onions, carrot and leek for 10 minutes, until soft and golden.
5. Add the sherry and deglaze the pot, scraping up the bits. Boil for 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes, stock, bay and thyme.
6. Return the beef, cover and braise on low heat (or in a 150°C or 300°F oven) for 2 to 2½ hours, turning every 45 minutes, until it shreds easily with a fork.
7. Lift out the beef and shred it with two forks. Simmer the sauce, uncovered, for 10 minutes until thick, then stir the beef back in.
8. Taste for salt, scatter with parsley and serve.

## Notes

- **Serving:** with fried potatoes, rice or crusty bread; also good in croquetas, empanadas or tacos.
- **Make ahead:** keeps 3–4 days in the fridge, and tastes better on day two. Freeze shredded beef in its sauce for 3 months; thaw overnight.
- **Lean cut:** don't cook it too fast; keep the sauce at a bare bubble so the beef doesn't dry out.
- **Slow cooker:** sear the larded beef and cook the vegetables on the stove, then cook on low 7–8 hr or high 4 hr. Simmer the sauce uncovered 15 min to thicken.