



CHINESE

Five-Spice Braised Beef Shank (Lu Niu Rou)

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	6	15 min	2 hr 30 min	Braise	Shank

Ingredients

- 1 kg (2¼ lb) whole boneless beef shank pieces
 - 3 slices fresh ginger
 - 2 spring onions, cut into lengths
 - 2 tbsp neutral oil
 - 2 tbsp rock sugar (or 1 tbsp brown sugar)
 - 3 tbsp Shaoxing wine (or dry sherry)
 - 4 tbsp light soy sauce
 - 2 tbsp dark soy sauce (or 2 tbsp regular soy sauce plus 2 tsp molasses)
 - 3 star anise
- 1 cinnamon stick
 - 1 tsp Sichuan peppercorns (or ½ tsp black peppercorns plus 2 strips of lemon zest; no numbing tingle)
 - 2 bay leaves
 - 1 tsp fennel seeds
 - 3 cloves garlic, smashed
 - 1 litre (4 cups) water
- TO SERVE

 - Sliced spring onion and a little chilli oil

Steps

1. Put the shank pieces in a pot of cold water with half the ginger and spring onions. Bring to a boil over high heat and cook for 5 minutes, until grey scum rises. Drain and rinse the beef.
2. Heat the oil in a clean heavy pot over medium-low heat. Add the sugar and stir for 2 to 3 minutes until it melts into an amber caramel.
3. Add the beef and turn it in the caramel for 3 minutes until glossy and coloured.
4. Add the remaining ginger, spring onion and garlic, and the whole spices. Stir for 1 minute until fragrant.
5. Pour in the wine, both soy sauces and the water. The beef should be almost covered.
6. Bring to a boil, then cover and braise over low heat for 2 hours, turning the pieces halfway, until a chopstick slides into the thickest part.
7. Remove the lid and simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes, until the sauce is syrupy and coats a spoon.
8. Leave the shank in its sauce until cool, ideally chilled overnight, then slice thinly against the grain. Serve cold or warm, drizzled with the sauce.

Notes

- **Serving:** slice for cold appetizers, or add to noodle soup or a bun. The jellied sauce is delicious.
- **Reuse:** strain and freeze the braising liquid as a master stock for next time.
- **Heat:** add 2 dried red chillies for a spicier version.
- **Slow cooker:** after step 5, cook on low 8 hr or high 4–5 hr. Reduce the sauce in a pan, uncovered, until syrupy.

- **Freezer:** the beef freezes in its sauce for 3 months. Thaw overnight in the fridge and reheat until steaming hot.
- **Pair with:** a crisp cucumber salad with rice vinegar and sesame.