



ROMANIAN

Pastramă

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Complex	8	30 min + 7 days	4 hr	Cure	Brisket

Ingredients

- 2 kg (4½ lb) beef brisket flat, trimmed to 5 mm (¼ in) fat cap

BRINE

- 2 litres (8 cups) water
- 120 g (½ cup) kosher salt
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 6 g (1 tsp) pink curing salt (Prague powder #1 only, from butchers, sausage-making suppliers or online, not Himalayan pink salt; about 3 g per kg of meat)
- 6 cloves garlic, smashed

BRINE (CONT.)

- 2 tbsp black peppercorns
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds

RUB

- 3 tbsp coarsely ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp ground coriander
- 2 tbsp sweet paprika
- 1 tbsp ground thyme (or dried)
- 1 tbsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp ground savory or marjoram

Steps

1. Bring the brine ingredients to a boil in a pot over high heat and stir until the salt dissolves. Cool completely, then chill.
2. Submerge the brisket in the cold brine in a non-reactive container and weigh it down. Cure in the refrigerator for 7 days, turning every other day.
3. Rinse the brisket and soak it in fresh cold water for 2 hours, changing the water once, to remove the surface salt.
4. Mix the rub, pat the brisket dry, and press the rub thickly onto all sides.
5. Heat the oven to 120°C (250°F). Set the brisket on a rack over a tray, fat side up. Roast, uncovered, for 2 hours, until the crust is dark and dry.
6. Add a splash of water to the tray, cover the brisket tightly with foil, and continue roasting for 2 hours more, until a skewer slides in easily (about 93°C / 200°F inside).
7. Rest for 30 minutes, then slice about 3 mm (⅛ in) thick against the grain.

Notes

- **Smoke it:** for a smoky version, hot-smoke at 120°C (250°F) with beech or oak for the first 3 hours, then wrap.
- **Make ahead:** chilled pastramă slices more thinly and reheats with a splash of water under foil for 20 minutes. Keeps 3–4 days.
- **Serving:** traditionally eaten with mămăligă (polenta), pickles and a sharp mustard.

- **Freezer:** wrap sliced portions tightly and freeze up to 3 months; thaw in the fridge and reheat under foil until steaming hot.