



BRITISH (LONDON)

Salt Beef

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Complex	8	30 min + 5 to 7 days	3 hr	Cure	Brisket

Ingredients

- 2 kg (4½ lb) beef brisket, trimmed of excess fat

BRINE

- 2 litres (8 cups) water
- 150 g (⅔ cup) coarse sea salt
- 75 g (⅓ cup) light brown sugar
- 6 g (1 tsp) pink curing salt (Prague powder #1, from butchers, sausage-making suppliers or online; about 3 g per kg of meat)
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 1 tbsp mustard seeds

BRINE (CONT.)

- 6 juniper berries (optional; leave out if you can't find them)
- 4 cloves garlic, smashed
- 3 bay leaves

TO COOK

- 1 onion, halved
- 2 carrots, halved
- 1 celery stick
- Rye bread, English mustard and gherkins, to serve

Steps

1. Simmer the brine ingredients in a saucepan over medium heat for 5 minutes, stirring until the salt and sugar dissolve. Let it cool completely, then chill.
2. Put the brisket in a deep non-reactive container or large zip bag and pour the cold brine over. Weight it down so the meat stays submerged.
3. Cure in the refrigerator for at least 5 days, ideally 7 for a brisket 5 to 6 cm (2 in) thick, turning the beef once a day. The meat will firm up and turn a deep rosy pink inside.
4. Rinse the brisket under cold water. If you like it milder, soak it in fresh water for 1 hour.
5. Put it in a large pot with the onion, carrot and celery. Cover with cold water, bring to a boil over high heat, and skim off any foam.
6. Lower the heat so the water barely trembles. Cover and simmer for 3 hours, topping up with hot water if needed, until a skewer slides in easily.
7. Rest the beef in its hot liquid for 20 minutes, then slice about 5 mm (¼ in) thick against the grain.
8. Pile the slices onto rye bread with plenty of English mustard and gherkins.

Notes

- **Curing salt:** it keeps the meat pink and protects against bacteria during the long brine. Use Prague powder #1 only, not Himalayan pink salt, and do not skip it or exceed the amount given.
- **Make ahead:** the cooked beef keeps 3–4 days chilled in its liquid, and slices best cold.
- **Serving:** the leftover broth makes a good base for pea or split-pea soup.

- **Slow cooker:** after curing and rinsing, cover with water and cook on low 8–10 hr or high 5–6 hr. No browning needed.
- **Freezer:** slice cooled beef, add a splash of cooking liquid and freeze up to 3 months.