



VENEZUELAN

Pabellón Criollo

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	6	30 min + overnight soaking	2 hr 30 min	Braise	Flank steak

Ingredients

- 1 kg (2¼ lb) flank steak, in 2 or 3 pieces
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 240 ml (1 cup) beef stock
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 250 g (1⅓ cups) dried black beans, soaked overnight
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 ripe plantains, sliced on the diagonal
- 400 g (2 cups) long-grain white rice, uncooked
- 1 small onion, 2 cloves garlic and ½ green bell pepper, finely chopped, for the beans
- Vegetable oil for frying
- 4 fried eggs (optional) and crumbled queso blanco (or feta), to serve

Steps

1. Drain the soaked beans, cover with fresh water by 5 cm (2 in), add the bay leaf, and simmer for 1½ hours until soft. Salt in the last 15 minutes and drain, keeping some liquid.
2. Season the flank with the salt. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a heavy pot over medium-high heat and sear the beef for 4 minutes per side. Remove.
3. Add the remaining oil, onion and pepper. Cook on medium for 5 minutes until soft, then add the garlic, cumin and tomato paste for 2 minutes.
4. Pour in the stock and Worcestershire, return the beef, cover, and braise on low heat for 2 hours, until the beef shreds easily.
5. Shred the beef with two forks, return to the sauce, and simmer uncovered for 10 minutes until moist but not soupy.
6. Fry the plantains in 1 cm (¾ in) hot oil over medium heat for 2 minutes per side, until golden and caramelised. Drain on paper.
7. Sauté the beans' chopped onion, garlic and pepper in 1 tbsp oil for 4 minutes until soft, stir in the beans and a splash of their liquid, and simmer 5 minutes, mashing a few to thicken. Cook the rice in 700 ml (3 cups) water with salt, covered, for 15 to 18 minutes until tender.
8. Plate the rice, shredded beef, beans and plantains side by side. Top with a fried egg and cheese.

Notes

- **Make ahead:** the beef and beans both improve overnight. Fridge 3 to 4 days; freeze the shredded beef 3 months. Reheat to steaming hot.

- **Shortcut:** canned black beans, drained and simmered 15 minutes with the bay leaf and a little cumin, work well.
- **Other cuts:** skirt steak is also traditional, as in carne mechada.
- **Slow cooker:** sear and make the sofrito as written, then cook the beef on low 8 hr or high 4 to 5 hr with 120 ml (½ cup) stock. Shred and simmer uncovered to thicken.