



VIETNAMESE

Beef in Betel Leaves (Bò Lá Lốt)

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	4	40 min	12 min	Grill	Ground beef

Ingredients

ROLLS

- 500 g (1 lb) ground beef, 80/20
- 24 to 30 la lot (wild betel) leaves
- 2 shallots, finely minced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 stalk lemongrass, white part only, finely minced
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil

ROLLS (CONT.)

- 1 tsp five-spice powder (optional)
- Bamboo skewers, soaked 20 minutes

DIPPING SAUCE (NUOC CHAM)

- 3 tbsp fish sauce
- 3 tbsp sugar
- 3 tbsp lime juice
- 120 ml (½ cup) warm water
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 small chilli, sliced

TO SERVE

- Rice vermicelli, lettuce, mint, cucumber

Steps

1. Whisk the sauce ingredients together until the sugar dissolves and set aside.
2. Mix the beef, shallots, garlic, lemongrass, fish sauce, sugar, salt, pepper, oil and five-spice. Knead with your hands for 2 minutes until sticky. Marinate for 20 minutes.
3. Wash and dry the leaves. Lay one shiny-side down with the stem toward you.
4. Place about 1 tbsp of the beef near the stem end and shape into a short log. Fold in the sides and roll up into a neat cigar about 6 cm (2½ in) long.
5. Thread 3 to 4 rolls onto each skewer, keeping them snug.
6. Heat a grill or grill pan to medium-high and oil the grate.
7. Grill the skewers for 10 to 12 minutes, turning every 3 minutes, until the leaves are charred in spots and the beef inside reaches 71°C (160°F).
8. Serve hot with noodles, herbs, lettuce and the dipping sauce.

Notes

- **Leaves:** la lot is sold at Vietnamese groceries; grape leaves or shiso are substitutes but taste different.
- **Make ahead:** roll and refrigerate a day ahead; freeze for up to 1 month.
- **Pan option:** pan-fry in 1 tbsp oil over medium heat if you cannot grill.
- **Air fryer:** preheat to 190°C (375°F). Cook the skewers in a single layer for 10 to 12 minutes, turning halfway, until 71°C (160°F) inside.