



HUNGARIAN

Beef Pörkölt

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	5	20 min	2 hr 30 min	Stew	Shank

Ingredients

- 1 kg (2¼ lb) boneless beef shank, cut into 3 cm (1¼ in) cubes
 - 3 tbsp lard or neutral oil
 - 3 large onions, finely chopped
 - 3 cloves garlic, crushed
 - 1½ tbsp sweet Hungarian paprika
 - ½ tsp hot paprika (optional)
 - 1 tsp salt, plus more to taste
 - 1 tsp caraway seeds, lightly crushed
 - 1 tbsp tomato paste
 - 1 ripe tomato, chopped
 - 1 green pepper, sliced
 - 250 ml (1 cup) water, plus more as needed
 - 1 bay leaf
- TO SERVE**
- Egg dumplings (nokedli), egg noodles or boiled potatoes
 - Sour cream and pickles

Steps

1. Heat the lard in a heavy pot over medium-low heat. Add the onions with a pinch of salt and cook for 15 minutes, stirring often, until very soft and golden.
2. Take the pot off the heat. Stir in the garlic, both paprikas and the caraway; paprika burns and turns bitter easily, so work briskly for 30 seconds.
3. Add the beef and salt, and return to medium heat. Stir for 5 minutes, until the meat has lost its raw colour and is coated in red.
4. Stir in the tomato paste, then add the tomato, green pepper, water and bay leaf.
5. Bring to a bare bubble, cover tightly and stew over low heat for 2 hours. Stir every 30 minutes and add a splash of water only if the pot looks dry; pörkölt is thick, not soupy.
6. Test the beef: it should cut with a spoon. If not, cook another 20 to 30 minutes.
7. Uncover and simmer 5 minutes if the sauce is thin, until it is rust-red and clings to the meat.
8. Taste for salt and serve over dumplings or noodles with sour cream and pickles.

Notes

- **Difference from goulash:** pörkölt has a thicker, onion-based sauce and no potatoes in the pot; goulash is a soup.
- **Paprika:** use fresh, good-quality Hungarian paprika; old paprika tastes dusty.
- **Make ahead:** reheats very well the next day and freezes for 3 months.
- **Slow cooker:** cook the onions and paprika on the stove and stir in the beef to coat (step 3), then cook on low 8 hr or high 4–5 hr with only 120 ml (½ cup) water.
- **Pair with:** a cucumber salad dressed with vinegar, a little sugar and a pinch of paprika.