



AMERICAN (SOUTHWEST)

Braised Beef Shank Chili

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	6	30 min	3 hr 15 min	Braise	Shank

Ingredients

- 1.5 kg (3½ lb) cross-cut beef shank, 4 cm (1½ in) thick
 - 1½ tsp salt, plus more to taste
 - 3 tbsp vegetable oil
 - 3 dried ancho chillies, stemmed and seeded
 - 2 dried guajillo chillies, stemmed and seeded
 - 500 ml (2 cups) boiling water
 - 2 onions, chopped
 - 5 cloves garlic, minced
 - 1 jalapeño, minced
 - 2 tbsp ground cumin
 - 1 tbsp dried oregano, preferably Mexican
 - 1 tbsp tomato paste
 - 400 g (14 oz) canned fire-roasted tomatoes
 - 350 ml (1½ cups) beef stock or dark beer
 - 1 tbsp cocoa powder or 30 g (1 oz) dark chocolate
 - 400 g (14 oz) can pinto beans, drained (optional)
 - Lime juice, to finish
- TO SERVE**
- Sour cream, grated cheddar, chopped onion, cilantro, cornbread

Steps

1. Toast the dried chillies in a dry pan over medium heat for 1 minute per side, until fragrant. Cover with the boiling water and soak 20 minutes, until soft. Blend with their water until smooth.
2. Season the shanks with 1 tsp of the salt. Heat the oil in a heavy pot over medium-high heat and brown them for 4 minutes per side, until deep brown. Set aside.
3. Lower to medium and cook the onions for 8 minutes, until soft. Add the garlic, jalapeño, cumin and oregano and stir for 1 minute.
4. Add the tomato paste and cook 1 minute, then pour in the stock and scrape the bottom of the pot.
5. Add the chilli purée, tomatoes, cocoa and the remaining salt, then nestle in the shanks, which should be about two-thirds covered.
6. Cover and braise over low heat (or in a 150°C (300°F) oven) for 2½ to 3 hours, until the meat falls off the bone.
7. Lift out the shanks, shred the meat, and discard the bones and gristle. Return the meat to the pot with the beans, if using.
8. Simmer uncovered over medium heat for 15 minutes, until the chili is thick and glossy. Finish with lime juice and serve with the toppings.

Notes

- **Heat:** add a dried chile de árbol or a pinch of cayenne for more fire; the anchos give depth, not heat.
- **Marrow:** stir it into the chili for richness.
- **Make ahead:** chili is better the next day; it freezes for 3 months. Reheat until steaming hot.

- **Slow cooker:** brown the shanks and cook the onions first, then low 8–9 hr or high 5 hr. Simmer uncovered on high for 20 minutes to thicken.
- **Chef's touch:** salt the shanks an hour or more ahead; the salt seasons the meat deeply, not just the surface.