

09/21 Osso Buco

YIELD: 6 servings PREP: 15 mins COOK: 2 hours

Headnote

A classic Italian braise, osso buco is made with veal shanks which have been sliced crossways, to give each person a hefty piece of collagen-rich meat with a piece of marrow bone in the center. Cooking the meat on the bone results in a meatier, more savory taste, and long slow cooking makes the meat tender to the point of falling apart.

Using combi steam to make this dish is a little faster than in a normal oven, and you won't need as much liquid to start it off, so the flavors are concentrated and deep.

Serve this with Risotto alla Milanese or creamy mashed potatoes, and gremolata, a fresh mix of parsley, garlic and lemon zest designed to balance the richness of the meat and sauce. I make osso buco with veal, although beef osso buco will also work. Beef may need up to an hour longer to cook, as it'll be a little tougher than veal.

Ingredients

- 6 thick veal osso buco (250g/8.5oz each)
- ½ cup all purpose/plain flour
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 3-4 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 carrot, finely diced
- 1 celery stick, finely diced
- 1 x 10oz (400g) can crushed tomatoes
- ½ cup (125ml) dry white wine or chicken broth
- 1 cup (250ml) chicken broth
- 1 beef stock cube (bouillon cube, optional, for depth of flavor)
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 2 bay leaves

Gremolata:

- 1 bunch flat leaf parsley, leaves picked
- Zest from 2 large lemons, finely grated
- ½-1 clove garlic, peeled

Method

1. Mix the flour, salt and pepper together in a shallow bowl or on a dinner plate. Thoroughly coat the meat in this mixture. Discard any leftover seasoned flour.
2. Preheat oven to Combi Steam, 285°F/140°C, 30% (low) humidity.
3. While the oven heats, heat a large, heavy based casserole pan on your cooktop, over high heat. Add 1 tbs oil and brown the meat all over. You'll need to do this in 2-3 batches, adding a little extra oil in between if the pan becomes too dry. Set the meat aside as each batch is done.
4. When the meat is browned, take the empty pan off the heat. Add 1 tbs oil, along with the onion, garlic, carrot and celery, and stir to combine. There's no need to clean the pan before doing this – any browned bits of flour or meat which are left will be deglazed as the vegetables cook.
5. Put the pan into the preheated steam oven and cook for 6 minutes to soften the vegetables.
6. Add the tomatoes, wine, stock and stock cube to the pan and stir. Return the meat to the pan, making sure it's mostly submerged in the sauce. Tuck the herbs into the pan, then return it to the oven (no lid) and cook for 1½- 2½ hours, until the meat can be easily pulled from the bone with a fork and the sauce is thick. The cooking time will vary depending on the age and toughness of your meat – grain fed meat tends to soften faster, while grass fed takes a little longer.
7. While the meat cooks, prepare the gremolata by finely mincing the parsley, lemon zest and garlic together. This mixture can be made up to a couple of hours ahead and stored in the fridge until serving.
8. Serve the osso buco hot, with mash or risotto and gremolata sprinkled over the top. If there are leftovers I like to shred the meat back into the sauce and save it as a luxurious ragu to serve over pasta another night.