Cabernet Braised Short Ribs

Prep: About 30 minutes | Cook: About 2-2 1/2 hours | Makes: 6 servings

Bone-in short ribs pressure cooked with Cabernet Sauvignon, fire-roasted tomatoes, vegetables, and herbs, finished with a smooth sauce reduced on the stove.

Ingredients

- 3 lb bone-in beef short ribs, thick English cut, with most visible fat trimmed
- 1 large Vidalia onion, diced
- 8 oz baby carrots, diced
- 2 large celery stalks, diced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 of a small 6 oz can tomato paste (3 oz)
- 1 large 28 oz can fire-roasted diced tomatoes, with their juices
- 1 bottle Cabernet Sauvignon, 750 ml; use 1 1/2 cups for cooking and reserve the rest for dinner
- 3 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 dried bay leaves
- Up to 1/4 cup all-purpose flour, for thickening as needed
- 1/2 cup cold water, for the flour slurry
- 1 1/2 tsp kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
- 2 tbsp olive oil or neutral oil, plus extra if needed for browning

Method

1. Prepare the vegetables and herbs. Dice the onion, baby carrots, and celery into roughly equal 1/2-inch pieces. Mince the garlic separately. Tie the rosemary and thyme together with kitchen twine. Alternatively, place the rosemary, thyme, and both bay leaves in a small piece of cheesecloth and tie it closed with kitchen twine to make a pouch.

2. Dry and season the short ribs. Pat the short ribs dry on all sides with paper towels. Removing excess surface moisture helps the ribs brown and develop a flavorful crust in the hot pot instead of steaming. Season with the kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper.

3. Brown the short ribs. Set the Instant Pot to Sauté and add the oil. When hot, brown the short ribs well on all sides, working in batches to avoid overcrowding. Transfer to a separate bowl.

4. Sauté the vegetables. Add the onion, carrots, and celery to the pot. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 6-8 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for about 30 seconds, until fragrant.

5. Build the sauce base. Stir in half of a 6 oz can of tomato paste (3 oz) and cook for 1-2 minutes, stirring constantly. Add 1 1/2 cups Cabernet Sauvignon and thoroughly scrape the bottom to loosen all the browned bits. Simmer for 3-4 minutes to soften the wine’s harsh edge and let its fruity flavors shine. Add the entire 28 oz can of fire-roasted tomatoes with their juices and stir until incorporated.

6. Return the short ribs. Stir in 3 cups low-sodium beef broth. Return the short ribs and accumulated juices, nestling them among the vegetables and liquid. Add the tied herb bundle and 2 bay leaves, or the prepared cheesecloth pouch containing all three herbs. Keep the contents below the pressure-cooking maximum fill line.

7. Pressure cook and check tenderness. Secure the lid and set the valve to Sealing, if applicable. Cook on High Pressure for 1 hour. Allow a 20-minute natural release, then carefully release any remaining pressure before opening. The meat should yield easily to a fork. If still firm, cook for another 10-15 minutes on High Pressure, followed by another natural release.

8. Remove the ribs and herbs. Transfer the ribs to a bowl and cover to keep warm. Remove any bones still attached to the meat and retrieve all loose bones from the pot. Lift out and discard the tied herb bundle and both bay leaves, or remove the entire cheesecloth pouch. Skim excess fat from the sauce before blending.

9. Reduce the sauce on the stove. Carefully pour the sauce and cooked vegetables from the Instant Pot into a larger, wide pot on the stove. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook uncovered for about 20-30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce has reduced by half. The exact time will depend on the width of the pot and the heat.

10. Blend the sauce. Remove the pot from the heat and let the bubbling settle. Use an immersion blender to blend the vegetables into the sauce until smooth, keeping the blender head submerged to prevent splashing.

11. Thicken only as needed. If the sauce needs more body, whisk 1/4 cup flour with 1/2 cup cold water until completely smooth. Return the pot to the stove and bring the sauce to a gentle simmer. Whisk in the slurry a little at a time, using only as much as needed. Simmer for 5-10 minutes after adding flour, stirring frequently, until fully cooked and thickened.

12. Season and warm the short ribs. Taste the finished sauce and season with additional salt and freshly ground black pepper. Gently return the boneless ribs to the sauce and warm through.

Serving suggestion

Serve the short ribs over Creamy Dreamy Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes, as pictured, and spoon the rich Cabernet sauce over the top. Enjoy with crusty bread and a glass of the remaining Cabernet.

Other delicious pairings

Give that Cabernet sauce something delicious to soak into. Buttery egg noodles catch it in every twist, fluffy white rice absorbs its rich flavor, and creamy polenta makes a cozy base for the tender ribs. Use whichever starch you love-just leave plenty of room for the sauce.