This is a slow, patient ragu built on braised beef short rib rather than ground meat – the long braise breaks the connective tissue down into a sauce richer than any quick weeknight bolognese. Start the stock the day before if you can; it keeps well and the ragu is better for it.

Braised Short-Rib Ragù

45 minutes
3 hours
6 people
House recipe

Preparation 1. Season the short ribs generously with salt and pepper. Heat a heavy casserole over high heat with a splash of olive oil and brown the ribs on all sides, working in batches so the pan stays hot. Set the ribs aside.

2. Lower the heat to medium. Add the onion, carrot and celery to the same pot and cook for 8 minutes until softened. Add the garlic and tomato paste and cook for 2 minutes more, stirring constantly so the paste does not catch.

3. Pour in the red wine, scraping up the browned bits from the bottom of the pot, and simmer for 3 minutes to cook off the alcohol.

4. Return the ribs to the pot. Add the crushed tomatoes, stock, bay leaves and rosemary. Bring to a bare simmer, cover, and transfer to a 160°C oven for 3 hours, until the meat falls from the bone.

5. Lift the ribs out, discard the bones, and shred the meat back into the sauce. Skim excess fat from the surface. Simmer uncovered for a further 15 minutes to thicken. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

6. Cook the pappardelle in well-salted water until al dente, then toss directly through the ragu with a splash of the pasta water.

Ingredients

2.5 kg	bone-in beef short ribs
1	onion, finely diced
2	carrots, finely diced
2	celery stalks, finely diced
6	cloves garlic, minced
200 ml	red wine
800 g	crushed tomatoes
1 litre	Brown Beef Stock (see below)
2	bay leaves
1	sprig rosemary
3 tbsp	tomato paste
	olive oil, salt, black pepper
500 g	pappardelle, to serve

Make ahead

The ragu improves overnight in the refrigerator and freezes well for up to three months – make a double batch.

Hint

If the sauce is too thin after 15 minutes of reducing, remove the lid entirely and simmer harder rather than adding flour or cornstarch: the gelatine from the bones is doing the thickening work.

A dark, roasted stock is what gives the ragu above its depth. This makes more than the ragu needs; freeze the rest in small containers.

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Brown Beef Stock

20 minutes
4 hours
about 1.5 litres

Preparation 1. Heat the oven to 220℃. Spread the bones, onions, carrots and celery on a roasting tray and roast for 45 minutes, turning once, until deeply browned.

2. Transfer the roasted bones and vegetables to a large stockpot. Deglaze the roasting tray with a splash of water, scraping up the browned bits, and add this to the pot along with the tomato paste.

3. Add the cold water, bay leaves and peppercorns. Bring to a bare simmer – never a boil – skimming any foam from the surface for the first 20 minutes.

4. Simmer uncovered for 4 hours, topping up with water if it reduces below the level of the bones. Strain through a fine sieve, discarding the solids, and cool before refrigerating or freezing.

Ingredients

2 kg	beef bones (marrow and knuckle)
2	onions, quartered, skin on
2	carrots, halved
2	celery stalks, halved
3 tbsp	tomato paste
2	bay leaves
10	black peppercorns
3 litres	cold water

Hint

A rolling boil emulsifies the fat into the liquid and clouds the stock. Keep it at the barest simmer – the occasional lazy bubble.