



Braised Beef With Star Anise

Cubes of braised beef enrobed with a garlicky, gingery, star-anise sauce, does it get any better? We don't think so! You can serve the beef with either steamed rice or Chinese noodles that have been boiled until al dente then fried in a bit of oil until hot and some crispy stir fried veggies. When making an Asian meal, it's nice not to have to do everything in a wok at the last minute and this dish fits the bill nicely. I have been known to turn the leftovers into an Asian noodle soup too...tasty!

Makes 6 Servings

2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
3 lbs. stewing beef, cut into 1 1/2" cubes
3 medium onions, chopped
4 cloves garlic, slivered
1/4 cup light soy sauce
2 Tbsp. brown sugar
4 tsp. grated fresh gingerroot
1 Tbsp. molasses
1 Tbsp. white vinegar
3 or 4 whole star anise
2 long strips orange rind (rind only, no pith)
1 fresh or a dried crumbled Thai chili
Salt & pepper to taste
2 Tbsp. cornstarch
1/3 cup cold water

Garnish: 1 cup diagonally sliced green onions

Preheat the oven to 325 F.

Heat the oil in a large deep sauté pan or Dutch oven over medium-high heat; blot the cubes of beef dry & brown in batches (making sure not to crowd the pan); adding more oil if necessary. As the meat browns, remove to a plate. Reduce the heat if it is getting too hot as you don't want to burn the goodies on the bottom of the pan. Once the meat is browned, reduce the heat to medium & sauté the onions & garlic, stirring for about 3 minutes. Return the beef to the pan along with the soy sauce, sugar, ginger, molasses, vinegar, star anise, orange rind, chilies & 2 cups of water, scraping up brown bits on the bottom of the pan. Bring to a boil; cover & simmer, place in the oven for 1 1/2 to 2 hours or until beef is tender stirring every 30 minutes. Remove orange rind & star anise; season with salt & pepper to taste. Blend cornstarch into 1/3 cup of water & stir half into the pan; cook until liquid thickens, adding cornstarch mixture if required. Place the beef & the sauce on a large serving platter & garnish with the green onions.

