

## Beef Brisket Braised in Ancho-Dark Beer Sauce

### *Pecho de Res en Salsa de Ancho-Cerveza Oscura*

Brisket is a flavorful yet fibrous cut that breaks down into a wonderful texture with long braising. This recipe is adapted from numerous brisket dishes being served at Nuevo Latino restaurants around the country, with the malty Negra Modelo beer adding some depth here.

4 dried ancho chiles, about 2 oz., toasted, seeded, torn into pieces

2 pounds, about 6, medium tomatoes, blackened on stovetop

3 1/2 pound beef brisket, cut into 2 to 3-inch cubes

Salt to rub brisket, plus 2 teaspoons for braising purée

Black pepper

3 tablespoons olive oil, plus 1 tablespoon more if necessary

3 large white onions, cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices

4 cloves garlic, chopped

1 tablespoon cumin seed, toasted

1 tablespoon dried oregano

2 teaspoons coriander seed, toasted

1 tablespoon paprika, toasted

3 bottles Negra Modelo beer

Corn or flour tortillas

Tomatillo Salsa

Tomatillo and Chile de Árbol Salsa

Chopped onion and cilantro

Queso fresco

Limes

1. In a medium cast iron or heavy pan, toast the dried anchos over medium heat.

Set them aside, let cool, then stem, seed, and tear into pieces. Put pieces in a small metal bowl and pour 1 cup hot water over them. Cover the bowl and let set 30 minutes. Note: At Step 6, save the soaking water.

2. While toasting the chiles, blacken tomatoes directly on stovetop burners, turning frequently. Then set them aside to cool. When cool, peel, core and roughly chop tomatoes, reserving all liquid. (On an electric stove, roast the tomatoes on a medium cast iron or heavy pan over medium heat, turning them frequently until blackened as much as possible while still retaining firmness in the tomatoes.)

Preheat oven to 250 [de] F.

3. Pat the brisket dry with paper towels and salt and pepper to taste. Then cut brisket into 2 to 3-inch cubes. In a large oven safe pot, heat oil and add brisket cubes, turning them to lightly brown all sides. Do this in groups if all the pieces don't fit on bottom of the pot. Remove brisket cubes and set aside.

Note: If pot doesn't have a lid, cover pot tightly with aluminum foil in Step 7.

4. In the same pot, add the onions and garlic, sautéing until lightly golden. If the meat absorbed most of the oil, add another tablespoon to the pot before adding the onions and garlic.

5. Meanwhile, toast the cumin, oregano, coriander, and paprika in a small cast iron or heavy pan over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the paprika just begins to change color, about 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from pan immediately and let cool on a small plate.

6. Remove half of the onions and garlic from the pot and blend in food processor or blender with soaked the ancho pieces, toasted herbs, 2 teaspoons salt, and half

of the tomatoes. Add 1/2 cup each of the reserved tomato liquid and ancho soaking water and blend until smooth. Add the remaining half of the chopped tomatoes to pot and stir sauce well.

7. Return the brisket pieces to pot. Add slowly, so that it doesn't foam over, up to 2 bottles of beer. On the stove over medium heat, bring pot to a boil, stirring frequently, then turn off heat. Put the lid on the pot and cook in oven for three hours or until tender.

To serve, remove pieces of meat with slotted spoon, let cool a bit, then shred them and put 2 ounce of meat on a warm corn or flour tortilla, topped with Tomatillo Salsa or Tomatillo and Chile de Árbol Salsa, chopped onions and cilantro, queso fresco and lime wedges. To reheat meat, put in a pan with some of the braising liquid.

Makes enough for 36 or more tacos.