

SLOW BRAISED SHORT RIBS

(Recipe courtesy Wolfgang Puck)

1 bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
6 short ribs, trimmed
Salt
1 teaspoon black peppercorns, crushed
Flour for dredging
10 cloves garlic, peeled
8 large shallots, peeled, trimmed, rinsed, split and dried
2 medium organic carrots, peeled, trimmed and cut into 1-inch lengths
2 stalks organic celery, peeled, trimmed and cut into 1-inch lengths
1 medium leek, white and light green parts only, coarsely chopped
6 sprigs Italian parsley
2 sprigs thyme
2 bay leaves
2 tablespoons tomato paste
2 quarts unsalted organic beef stock or chicken stock
Freshly ground white pepper

Pour the wine into a large saucepan set over medium heat. When the wine is heated, carefully set it aflame. Let the flames die out, then increase the heat so that the wine boils; allow it to boil until it cooks down by half. Remove from the heat.

Center a rack in the oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Heat the oil in a Dutch oven or large casserole, large enough to hold 6 ribs, over medium-high heat. Season the ribs all over with salt and the crushed pepper. Dust the ribs with about 2 tablespoons of flour and then when the oil is hot, slip the ribs into the pot and sear for 4 to 5 minutes on each side, until well browned.

Transfer the browned ribs to a plate. Remove all but 1 tablespoon of fat from the pot; lower the heat to medium, and toss in the vegetables and herbs. Brown the vegetables lightly, 5 to 7 minutes, then stir in the tomato paste and cook for 1 minute to blend.

Add the reduced wine, browned ribs, and stock to the pot. Bring to a boil; cover the pot tightly, and slide it into the oven to braise for about 2 ½ hours, or until the ribs are tender enough to be easily pierced with a fork. Every 30 minutes or so, lift the lid and skim and discard whatever fat may have bubbled up to the surface.

Carefully transfer the meat to a heated serving platter with a lip and keep warm. Boil the pan liquid until it thickens and reduces to approximately 1 quart. Season with salt and pepper and pass through a fine-mesh strainer; discard the solids.

Presentation: Pour the sauce over the meat. Serve with vegetables of your choice.

Yield: Serves 6