



Birria ala Marcos

This is a two day recipe. Start around noon on a friday or saturday making the chile paste, slather the meat with the paste in the afternoon and marinate overnight. The next day, you start cooking both the meat and making a consomme. If you start early enough, you'll have some ready to eat by lunch, or if you have other shopping to take care of, you can finish it around lunch and eat a more composed meal for dinner.

This is a sort of hybridized version of multiple recipes.

The first of the substitutions here is that it's apparently impossible to find bone-in beef shoulder (or any non-porterhouse bone-in stew cuts), so we use a fatty boneless chuck roast and pair it with some beef spare ribs.

The traditional technique (qv diana kennedy) steams the marinated meat in a sealed dutch oven for about 3 to 4 hours, with the meat slightly elevated above water in a roasting rack. This yields about a quart of consomme depending on the size of the dutch oven and the height of the roasting rack.

The second major change here is the realization that the consomme is a treat in itself, so instead of limiting the amount of consomme to the amount we could plausibly extract from braising, we instead make a separate beef stock *while* the birria is steaming/braising, we add the pureed tomatoes to it, and enrich it with the steaming/braising liquid. Only after this point should you determine how much more to season it, either with additional chile paste or with salt and pepper.

For this reason, you want to make sure that any creative substitutions in the chile paste don't make it aggressively spicy. This recipe uses a few arbol chiles alongside primarily ancho and guajillo chiles because that's what i had when i made it, but diana kennedy's ratio of 4/2/7 ancho/guajillo/cascobel is probably worth investigating as it is likely more mild, more flavorful, and (crucially) more colorful. Also consider subbing in california chiles for cascobel, again, just be mindful of the relative heat of each.

SOURCE MARCOS OJEDA | SERVINGS 8

PREP 18 HOURS | COOK 6 HOURS | TOTAL 24 HOURS

Day one

1 Before preparing the chile paste, crosshatch the spare ribs and the beef roast down and season well with salt.

MEAT, TOTALING ~6.5LB

- 2.5lb **Beef Short Ribs**
- 4lb **Beef Chuck Roast**
- 6 **Beef Bones w/ Marrow**

CHILES FOR CHILE PASTE:

- 6 **Ancho Chiles, Seeds and Veins Removed**
- 3 **Guajillo Chiles, Seeds and Veins Removed**
- 3 **Chiles de Arbol, Seeds and Veins Removed**

CHILE PASTE:

- 125mL **Apple Cider Vinegar**
- 18 **Peppercorns**
- 4 **Whole Cloves**
- 1 Tsp **Dried Mexican Oregano**
- 1/2 Cup **Sweet Onion (about half a small onion), Roughly Chopped**
- 8 **Garlic Cloves, Roughly Chopped**
- 2 Tsp **Salt**
- 200mL **Water**

THE CONSOMME

- 1 **Small onion**
- 3 **Bay Leaves**
- 4 **Garlic Cloves**
- Water**
- 900g **Tomatoes, Broiled and Blended until Smooth**

TO GARNISH:

- White Onion, Finely Chopped**
- Dried Mexican Oregano**

Cilantro, Finely Minced

Preparing the chile paste

- 1 Wearing nitrile food prep gloves, seed and de-vein the chiles.
- 2 Toast the chiles lightly so that they are fragrant, but before they burn.
- 3 Soak the chiles for 15 minutes in warm water, straining out the liquid. Some recipes reserve this liquid and use it in place of water, but this one doesn't, it might be worth trying though if you find that this recipe is too mild.
- 4 Either using a spice grinder or mortar and pestle, roughly crush the peppercorn and cloves.
- 5 Blend the vinegar, peppercorns, cloves, onion, garlic, chiles, and half the water (~50ml), blending until smooth and adding water progressively until the final mixture resembles a thick paste.
- 6 Again, wearing nitrile food prep gloves, cover the meats with the paste, place in a ziploc or food-safe container, and let rest overnight
- 7 It is unlikely you will have used all the paste, reserve what you have left for seasoning the consomme and the beef bones tomorrow.

Day Two

- 1 Slather the beef bones with some reserved chile paste and place in a roasting pan or lined sheet tray.

The Consomme

- 1 Add the beef bones to a cold oven and heat to 350°F, you want to take advantage of this time to get a small amount of color on the bones, but you don't need to really cook them a ton, just to take the edge off. Depending how long it takes for your oven to heat up, you'll be taking them out a few minutes after the oven hits 350.
- 2 Put the roasted bones in a stock pot, cover with water, add the onion, garlic, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil and simmer for 3 to 4 hours.

The Birria

- 1 Add some water to the bottom of a dutch oven and place the marinated meat above a roasting rack so that it's just over the water, it's fine if it touches.

2 Cover/Seal the dutch oven with foil and a lid and place in the 350°F oven to steam for 3 to 4 hours, at which point the meat will be falling off the bone. You can pull it here or wait until the consomme is finished. In either case, cover the birria until ready to serve.

The consomme again

1 Roast the tomatoes over a flame or toast them on a skillet. Steam them, peel them, and then blend them, straining to a smooth sauce, and incorporate to the consomme.

2 Strain (or don't) the juices from the bottom of the dutch oven. Take whatever is there and add it to the simmering consomme.

3 Taste the consomme and season as needed: you can add remaining chile paste, salt, pepper, whatever you want. The consomme will have a comically large raft of gelatin and fat.

Service

1 Serve 1 inch chunks of pulled birria in a bowl with some of the consomme and some tortillas, onion, cilantro, and oregano.

2 For dorados, dip a tortilla in the consomme and sautee on a griddle on both sides, fill with birria, fold in half, and toast on both sides.

3 For quesabirria, dip a tortilla in the consomme and sautee on a griddle on both sides and then put queso oxaca on one side, then once beginning to melt, flip the cheese side directly on the griddle until golden, flip, add birria atop the chesee and toast both sides.

partially pulled from

- *diana kennedy's cookbook*

- *rick bayless' birria*

- *birria recipe in nyt*

- <https://www.chowhound.com/post/birria-cook-572472>