

# SLOW-ROASTED BEEF CHEEKS WITH WARM SPICE RUB & FIG-SHERRY REDUCTION

PAIRED WITH 2021 MALBEC | YIELDS 4 SERVINGS

## INGREDIENTS

### BEEF & SPICE RUB

4 Beef Cheeks (about 2 lbs total)  
 1 tsp Kosher Salt  
 ½ tsp Smoked Paprika  
 ½ tsp ground Coriander  
 1 tsp Cinnamon  
 ½ tsp Nutmeg  
 1 tsp Black Pepper  
 1 tsp dried Thyme (or 1 tbsp fresh)  
 1 tsp Garlic Powder  
 ½ tsp Cayenne Pepper

### BRAISING LIQUID

2 tbsp Olive Oil  
 1 large Onion, diced  
 2 Carrots, diced  
 2 Celery stalks, diced  
 4 Garlic cloves, minced  
 1 cup Red Wine (Malbec or similar)  
 1 (14.5 oz) can diced Tomatoes  
 1 ½ cups Beef Stock (divided)  
 1 tsp dried Oregano (or 1 tbsp fresh)  
 1 tsp dried Rosemary (or 1 tbsp fresh)  
 1 Bay Leaf  
 ½ tsp Black Pepper  
 2 tbsp Brown Rice Flour

### FIG & SHERRY REDUCTION

½ cup dried Figs, chopped  
 ¾ cup dry Sherry  
 ¼ cup Balsamic Vinegar  
 ¼ cup Agave

## METHOD

- Pat the beef cheeks dry and coat evenly with the spice rub. Cover and refrigerate overnight to allow the flavors to develop.
- Preheat the oven to 300°F (150°C).
- Heat olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Sear the beef cheeks on all sides until well browned. Remove and set aside.
- Reduce heat to medium and add onion, carrots, and celery. Add garlic and cook until fragrant.
- Pour in the red wine, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Let simmer to reduce slightly.
- Stir in diced tomatoes, 1 cup beef stock, oregano, rosemary, bay leaf, and a pinch of black pepper. Bring to a simmer.
- Add the beef cheeks back to the pan. They should be partially submerged in the liquid.
- Cover the Dutch oven with a tight-fitting lid and place in the oven and braise for 3.5 hours, or until the beef cheeks are almost fork-tender.
- Remove the beef cheeks from the oven and discard the bay leaf.
- Combine the remaining ½ cup beef stock with the brown rice flour in a bowl until no lumps remain. Pour the mixture into the pot with the beef cheeks and gently stir to combine.
- Return the beef cheeks to the oven and continue cooking for 30 minutes to one hour. Remove pot from oven, taste the sauce and adjust the seasoning.
- To make the fig and sherry reduction, combine all ingredients in a small saucepan.
- Bring to a boil then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cook gently for 30-45 minutes until the consistency is somewhat syrupy. Remove from heat and set aside.
- To serve, remove the beef cheeks from the braising liquid and either shred or serve in larger tender chunks. Serve over blue cheese mashed potatoes or creamy polenta. Spoon some of the braising sauce over the beef, followed by a drizzle of the fig and sherry reduction. Garnish with fresh parsley or chopped chives.

## BLUE CHEESE MASHED POTATOES

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### INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs Yukon Gold Potatoes, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 4 tbsp unsalted Butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup Half-and-Half
- 4 oz crumbled Blue Cheese
- 1 tsp Kosher Salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp Black Pepper
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh Chives or Parsley (for garnish)

### METHOD

1. Place the potato chunks in a large pot and cover with cold salted water.
2. Bring to a boil and cook until fork-tender, about 15-18 minutes.
3. Drain well and return potatoes to the warm pot to evaporate excess moisture.
4. In a small saucepan, heat the half-and-half and butter over low heat until warm but not boiling.
5. Mash the hot potatoes using a ricer or potato masher for a smooth consistency.
6. Slowly stir in the warm cream mixture, followed by the blue cheese.
7. Taste and season with salt and black pepper to preference.
8. Garnish with fresh chives or parsley. Serve warm.