



Short Ribs Braised in Balsamic

4 to 5 lb. bone-in beef short ribs, each about 3 inches long

1 to 2 tbs. salt, plus more, to taste

1 tbs. olive oil

2/3 cup balsamic vinegar

1/2 cup red grape juice

2 tbs. tomato paste

1 yellow onion, thinly sliced

6 garlic cloves, crushed

10 fresh flat-leaf parsley sprigs, plus 1/4 cup lightly packed fresh parsley leaves, chopped

2 bay leaves

Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Trim any excess fat off the short ribs but leave the silver skin and connective tissue intact.

Arrange the ribs in a single layer in a ceramic or glass baking dish. Sprinkle them with the 1 to 2 Tbs. salt and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours or up to overnight.

Remove the ribs from the refrigerator and pat dry with paper towels. In a large, heavy-bottomed fry pan over medium heat, warm the olive oil. Working in batches to avoid crowding, place the ribs in the pan and sear, turning once, until they develop a golden crust on both sides, about 4 minutes per side. As each batch is done, transfer it to a slow cooker.

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Add the vinegar, grape juice, tomato paste, onion, garlic, parsley sprigs and bay leaves to the cooker and stir to combine. Cover and cook on low for 4 to 6 hours according to the manufacturer's instructions. Uncover the cooker after 4 hours and check one of the thickest ribs; the meat should be very tender and falling off the bone. If not, re-cover and continue cooking, checking again about every 30 minutes.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer the ribs to a platter or large, shallow serving bowl. Discard the parsley sprigs and bay leaves.

Using a large spoon, skim off any fat from the surface of the cooking liquid. Transfer the cooking liquid to a saucepan (reserve the onion in the cooker), place over medium heat and simmer until reduced to about 3/4 cup, about 10 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasonings with salt and pepper.

Spoon the sauce around the ribs. Top with a few spoonfuls of the onion from the cooker, sprinkle with the chopped parsley and serve immediately. Serves 6 to 8.

Recipe redux: Since short ribs are best when simmered long and slow, make this dish when you're feeling like a homebody. Serve it for dinner the same night, then store the leftovers (they keep in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or in the freezer for up to 1 month). On a busy (or lazy) day, heat up the leftovers, pull the tender meat off the bones and stuff it into tortillas with sprigs of cilantro.

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