GEORGIAN

Kharcho

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	**6**	**25 min**	**2 hr 30 min**	**Stew**	**Braising ribs**

Ingredients

- 1.2 kg (2⅔ lb) beef braising ribs, cut into 2-rib pieces
- 2 litres (8 cups) water
- 2 onions, chopped
- 100 g (⅔ cup) walnuts, finely ground
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tbsp tkemali (sour plum sauce) or about 2 tbsp extra tomato paste with 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- 1 tbsp dried fenugreek leaves (optional)
- 1 tsp khmeli suneli (or ½ tsp each dried thyme and marjoram)
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- 70 g (⅓ cup) short-grain rice
- 1½ tsp salt, plus more to taste
- 1 bunch cilantro and a few sprigs of parsley, chopped

Steps

1. Put the ribs and water in a large pot. Bring to a boil over high heat and skim off the grey foam for the first 10 minutes.
2. Lower the heat, cover partly, and stew gently for 1 hour 30 minutes, until the meat is nearly tender.
3. In a skillet, cook the onions in 2 tbsp of the skimmed fat or oil over medium heat for 10 minutes, until golden.
4. Add the garlic, tomato paste, coriander and pepper flakes. Stir for 2 minutes, then scrape into the pot.
5. Add the tkemali, the walnuts and the rice. Stir well so the walnuts do not clump.
6. Simmer, uncovered, for 25 to 30 minutes over medium-low heat, stirring now and then, until the rice is soft and the soup is thick and rust-coloured.
7. Take off the heat, add the fenugreek and khmeli suneli, and the herbs. Taste for salt and sourness, adding more tkemali if wanted. Rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Notes

- **Sour:** tkemali is sold in Eastern European shops; the tomato and lemon substitute works in a pinch.
- **Texture:** the walnuts and rice thicken it into something between soup and stew.
- **Serving:** with crusty bread or Georgian shoti and a raw garlic clove.
- **Slow cooker:** simmer the ribs and water on low 8 hr or high 4 to 5 hr, make the onion mixture on the stove, then stir it in with the walnuts and rice and cook on high 40 minutes.
- **Make ahead:** it thickens as it sits; loosen with water when reheating. Fridge 3 to 4 days; reheat to steaming hot.