CHINESE (SHANGHAI)

Red-Braised Short Ribs (Hong Shao Niu Pai Gu)

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	4	20 min	2 hr 45 min	Braise	Braising ribs

Ingredients

- 1.5 kg (3⅓ lb) beef braising ribs, in 5 cm (2 in) pieces
- 2 tbsp neutral oil
- 3 tbsp rock sugar or white sugar
- 5 cm (2 in) piece ginger, sliced
- 4 scallions, cut into 5 cm (2 in) lengths, plus more to serve
- 4 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 star anise
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 dried red chillies (optional)
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) Shaoxing wine (or dry sherry)
- 3 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1 tbsp dark soy sauce
- 750 ml (3 cups) water or unsalted stock
- 2 carrots, cut into chunks
- Steamed rice and blanched bok choy, to serve

Steps

1. Put the ribs in a pot, cover with cold water and bring to a boil. Boil for 3 minutes, then drain and rinse off the scum. Pat dry.
2. Heat the oil in a wide pot over medium heat. Add the sugar and let it melt and turn amber, 3 to 4 minutes, swirling the pot but not stirring.
3. Add the ribs and turn them in the caramel until coated and browned at the edges, about 4 minutes. Keep the heat moderate so the sugar does not blacken.
4. Add the ginger, scallions, garlic, star anise, cinnamon and chillies and stir for 1 minute until fragrant.
5. Pour in the Shaoxing wine and let it bubble for 1 minute to deglaze the pot. Add both soy sauces and the water; the ribs should be just covered.
6. Bring to a boil, then cover and braise at a gentle simmer for 2 hours, turning the ribs once, until the meat is tender and nearly falling off the bone.
7. Add the carrots and cook uncovered for 30 minutes more, until the carrots are soft and the sauce has reduced to a glossy coating. Spoon the sauce over the ribs as it thickens.
8. Discard the whole spices and ginger. Serve the ribs and carrots over rice with bok choy, scattered with scallions.

Notes

- **Colour:** dark soy sauce gives the deep mahogany colour; if you only have light soy, add 1 tbsp more and a pinch of extra sugar.
- **Make ahead:** better the next day. Chill, lift off the fat and reheat gently with a splash of water.
- **Other cuts:** blade or cross rib roast in 5 cm cubes or shank slices work the same way; shank needs 30 minutes longer.

- **Pair with:** steamed rice and a plate of garlicky greens to cut the richness.