COLOMBIAN

Sancocho de Costilla

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

Ingredients

- 1.2 kg (2⅔ lb) beef braising ribs, cut into 2-rib pieces
- 2.5 litres (10 cups) water
- 1½ tbsp salt, plus more to taste
- 1 onion, halved
- 4 scallions, whites and greens separated, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 2 green plantains, peeled and cut into 4 cm (1½ in) chunks
- 500 g (1 lb) yuca, peeled and cut into chunks
- 500 g (1 lb) waxy potatoes, halved
- 2 corn cobs, each cut into 3 pieces
- 1 large bunch cilantro, stems tied, leaves chopped
- Avocado, white rice, lime and ají (hot sauce), to serve

Steps

1. Put the ribs, water, salt, onion, scallion whites, garlic, cumin and cilantro stems in a large pot.
2. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce to a steady, gentle simmer. Skim off the foam for the first 10 minutes.
3. Cover partly and cook for 1 hour 30 minutes, until the meat is tender and the broth is rich.
4. Add the yuca and plantains and simmer 15 minutes. They should start to soften.
5. Add the potatoes and corn. Cook another 20 to 25 minutes, until the potatoes and yuca are tender and the broth is slightly thickened by the starch.
6. Take out the onion and cilantro stems. Taste and add salt if needed; the soup should be savoury, not bland.
7. Ladle into wide bowls, with a rib and plenty of vegetables in each. Top with chopped cilantro and scallion greens, and serve with avocado, rice, lime and ají on the side.

Notes

- **Thickening:** many cooks mash a piece of plantain into the broth to thicken it.
- **Yuca:** frozen yuca is a good stand-in when you cannot find fresh.
- **Leftovers:** keep the broth separate from the vegetables so they do not go mushy. The broth freezes 3 months; reheat to steaming hot.
- **Slow cooker:** cook the ribs, water, salt, onion and garlic on low 8 hr or high 4 to 5 hr, then add the yuca, plantains, potatoes and corn for the last 1½ hr (low) or 1 hr (high).