THAI

Massaman Beef Curry

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	**6**	**20 min**	**2 hr 30 min**	**Braise**	**Blade & cross rib roast**

Ingredients

- 1 kg (2¼ lb) blade or cross rib roast, cut into 4 cm (1½ in) cubes
- 800 ml (3⅓ cups) coconut milk (two 400 ml cans)
- 4 tbsp massaman curry paste (or 3 tbsp Thai red curry paste + 2 tsp mild curry powder; a little less warm-spiced)
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 cardamom pods, cracked
- 2 onions, cut into wedges
- 500 g (1 lb) waxy potatoes, cut into 4 cm (1½ in) chunks
- 3 tbsp fish sauce
- 2 tbsp palm sugar or brown sugar
- 2 tbsp tamarind paste (or juice of 1 lime)
- 60 g (½ cup) roasted peanuts
- 250 ml (1 cup) water

Steps

1. Scoop the thick cream from the top of the cans into a heavy pot, about 200 ml (¾ cup). Heat over medium heat for 3 minutes until it bubbles and the oil begins to separate.
2. Add the curry paste and fry for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring, until it smells fragrant and darkens slightly.
3. Add the beef and stir to coat. Cook for 5 minutes, then pour in the remaining coconut milk and the water. Add the cinnamon and cardamom.
4. Bring to a gentle bubble, cover, and braise on low heat for 1½ hours, stirring now and then, until the beef is nearly tender.
5. Add the onions, potatoes and peanuts. Cook uncovered at a gentle simmer for 30 minutes until the potatoes are soft and the sauce has thickened slightly.
6. Stir in the fish sauce, sugar and tamarind. Taste and balance: it should be rich, mildly salty, a little sweet and gently sour.
7. Rest for 10 minutes off the heat, skim any excess oil if you wish, and serve with jasmine rice.

Notes

- **Paste:** store-bought massaman paste is a good shortcut; use more or less depending on brand heat.
- **Make ahead:** the flavours settle overnight. It keeps 3 to 4 days and freezes for 3 months; reheat gently until steaming hot.
- **Slow cooker:** fry the cream and paste first, then cook the beef and coconut milk on low for 7 hours or high for 4. Add potatoes, onions and peanuts for the last 1½ hours (low).
- **Chef's touch:** finish with a squeeze of lime and a few torn coriander leaves. Fresh acid and herbs wake up the rich sauce.

- **Pair with:** jasmine rice and cucumber pickle.