NIGERIAN

Nigerian Beef Stew (Obe Ata)

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	**6**	**25 min**	**2 hr 15 min**	**Stew**	**Blade & cross rib roast**

Ingredients

- 1.1 kg (2½ lb) blade or cross rib roast, cut into 4 cm (1½ in) cubes
- 1 onion, quartered, plus 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 tsp salt, plus more to taste
- 2 stock cubes, crumbled (or 2 tsp bouillon powder)
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 4 red bell peppers (tatashe), deseeded and chopped
- 400 g (14 oz) ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 1 to 2 scotch bonnet or habanero peppers
- 125 ml (½ cup) palm oil or vegetable oil
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 2 bay leaves
- 250 ml (1 cup) reserved beef broth

Steps

1. Put the beef, quartered onion, 1 tsp salt, stock cubes and thyme in a pot with just enough water to barely cover. Bring to a boil, skim, then cover and simmer gently for 1 hour until the beef is half-tender.
2. Blend the bell peppers, tomatoes and scotch bonnet until smooth. Pour into a pan and cook over medium heat for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring, until most of the water has evaporated and the purée is thick.
3. Lift the beef out of its broth and keep the broth. Pat the beef dry.
4. In a heavy pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat until hot and shimmering (palm oil should be bubbling and clear). Fry the chopped onion for 3 minutes, then the tomato paste for 2 minutes.
5. Add the beef and fry for 5 to 8 minutes, turning, until it takes on colour. Stir in the reduced pepper purée, curry powder and bay leaves.
6. Fry for 15 minutes over medium heat, stirring so it does not catch, until the oil rises to the surface and the sauce turns deep red.
7. Add the reserved broth, cover, and stew on low heat for 30 to 40 minutes until the beef is tender and the oil floats on top. Taste for salt.

Notes

- **Serving:** with white rice, boiled yam, fried plantain or jollof rice.
- **Heat:** use one pepper, or deseed it before blending, for gentle warmth without much fire.
- **Make ahead:** boil the beef and blend the pepper purée a day ahead. The finished stew keeps 3 to 4 days and freezes for 3 months; reheat until steaming hot.

- **Slow cooker:** do step 1 on low for 6 to 8 hours (high 3 to 4). The beef will be fully tender, so fry it with the sauce in steps 4 to 6 and skip step 7's simmer.