JAMAICAN

Jamaican Oxtail Stew

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	**6**	**30 min + overnight**	**3 hr 30 min**	**Braise**	**Oxtail**

Ingredients

- 1.8 kg (4 lb) oxtail, cut into segments and trimmed of excess fat
- 2 tbsp browning sauce (or 1 tbsp dark brown sugar, caramelised in the pot)
- 2 tsp ground allspice
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 4 spring onions, sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 whole Scotch bonnet pepper (or habanero; leave it unpierced)
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 tbsp tomato ketchup
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 litre (4 cups) water or beef stock
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 400 g (14 oz) can butter beans, drained

Steps

1. Rinse the oxtail and pat dry. Rub with the browning, allspice, salt, pepper, half the spring onion, garlic and thyme. Marinate covered in the fridge overnight.
2. Heat the oil in a heavy pot over medium-high heat. Sear the oxtail in batches until deeply browned on all sides, about 4 minutes per side. Move to a plate.
3. Lower to medium, add the onion and remaining spring onion, and cook 3 minutes until soft.
4. Return the oxtail with the remaining garlic and thyme, the ketchup, soy sauce, Scotch bonnet and enough water to come two-thirds up the meat.
5. Bring to a bubble, cover, and braise on low heat for 2½ hours, topping up with water if the pot looks dry.
6. Add the carrots and cook 30 minutes more, until the meat is tender and nearly falling from the bone.
7. Stir in the butter beans and simmer uncovered for 15 minutes, until the gravy is glossy and coats a spoon.
8. Lift out the Scotch bonnet whole, taste for salt, and serve.

Notes

- **Heat:** the unbroken pepper adds fragrance without much fire; burst it in the pot for a properly hot stew.
- **Make ahead:** better the next day. Chill, lift off the set fat, then reheat until steaming hot. Keeps 3–4 days, or freezes 3 months.
- **Serving:** rice and peas and a little fried plantain are the classic partners.

- **Slow cooker:** marinate and brown as written, then cook on low 8–9 hr with 750 ml (3 cups) liquid. Add the carrots for the last 2 hr and the beans for 30 minutes, lid off to thicken.
- **Shortcut:** a pressure cooker takes about 50 minutes at high pressure; add the carrots for 5 more, then reduce the gravy.