VIETNAMESE

Rare Beef Pho (Phở Tái)

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	**4**	**30 min**	**2 hr 15 min**	**Poach**	**Top sirloin**

Ingredients

- 450 g (1 lb) top sirloin, trimmed and chilled
- 1.5 kg (3 lb) beef bones (knuckle or neck)
- 3 L (3 qt) water
- 1 large onion, halved
- 80 g (3 oz) fresh ginger, halved lengthwise
- 2 star anise
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 cloves
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 2 tbsp fish sauce, plus more to taste
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 tsp salt
- 400 g (14 oz) dried flat rice noodles
- 4 spring onions, thinly sliced
- To serve: bean sprouts, Thai basil (or Italian basil), lime wedges, sliced chilli, hoisin, sriracha

Steps

1. Put the bones in a large pot, cover with cold water, and bring to a boil over high heat. Boil 5 minutes until grey scum rises, then drain and rinse the bones and pot.
2. Char the onion and ginger, cut side down, in a dry pan over medium-high heat until blackened in spots, about 5 minutes. In the same pan, toast the star anise, cinnamon, cloves and coriander seeds for 1 minute, until fragrant.
3. Return the bones to the pot with the 3 L water, charred aromatics, spices, fish sauce, sugar and salt. Bring to a bare simmer on medium-low heat and cook uncovered for 1½ to 2 hours, skimming now and then, until the broth tastes beefy and clear.
4. Meanwhile, put the sirloin in the freezer for 20 minutes, then slice it across the grain as thinly as you can, almost see-through.
5. Soak the noodles in hot tap water for 20 minutes, then boil 1 minute in a pot of water until just tender. Drain and divide among bowls.
6. Strain the broth, return it to a rolling boil, and adjust with fish sauce and salt.
7. Lay the raw slices over the noodles and ladle the boiling broth on top. The slices will poach in 30 to 60 seconds and turn from red to pale pink.
8. Top with spring onions and serve with the herbs, sprouts, lime and chilli on the side.

Notes

- **Make ahead:** the broth keeps 4 days refrigerated and freezes well; bring it to a full boil before pouring.
- **Well-done fans:** drop the slices into the broth in a ladle for 1 minute.
- **Shortcut:** use 2 L (2 qt) good beef stock plus the spices simmered 30 minutes.

- **Slow cooker:** after parboiling the bones and charring the aromatics, cook everything on low 8–10 hr or high 5–6 hr. Use thawed bones, never frozen. Strain, then boil and season.
- **Chef's touch:** warm the bowls with hot water first so the broth stays piping hot and cooks the beef slices.