

Don's Brisket with Caramelized Onions in a Red Wine Sauce

Brisket:

Brisket 5 to 6 lbs., fat trimmed
2 cups yellow onion, chopped
2 cups carrots, sliced (or whole baby carrots)
2 garlic cloves, chopped
2 28oz. cans whole tomatoes
2 cups bold, but impertinent red wine, Merlot, Malbec Burgundy, etc.
2 Bay leaves
Olive oil
Salt & Pepper

Caramelized Onions:

2 sweet (Vidalia) onions, thinly sliced
Olive oil
Salt & Pepper

Sauce:

2-3 cups of liquid left from brisket
1 cup red wine
1 cup dried cherries + ¼ cup for sprinkling (or cranberries or apricots, etc.)
Salt & Pepper

Part 1

1. Preheat oven to 325°.
2. Trim excess fat from brisket as needed. Liberally season with salt and pepper.
3. Heat enough olive oil to almost cover the bottom of an oven-proof, heavy Dutch oven until almost smoking (very hot).
4. Cut the brisket into pieces that fit in the pot.
5. Thoroughly sear the brisket pieces on both sides until a rich, dark brown, 5-6 minutes per side. If very thick, sear edges, too. Set pieces aside on a plate.
6. Add 3 Tbl. oil to the pot and sauté the onions and carrots until the onions are translucent. Add garlic and cook 2 minutes.
7. Add tomatoes and lightly crush with a potato masher. Stir in wine and bay leaves.
8. Bring to a boil. Return brisket to pot. Brisket should be covered with liquid. (If all meat isn't covered, adjust pieces halfway through cooking.)
9. Cover pot and put in the oven. Cook for 3 hours.
10. Remove from oven and let cool to room temperature.
11. Carefully lift brisket with tongs from pot and wrap in foil. Refrigerate at least 5 hours or overnight.
12. Remove bay leaves from cooking liquid. Pass liquid through a sieve into a bowl.
13. Push the vegetables through a sieve with the back of a large spoon. (Remove carrots first if you like them whole.) Refrigerate sauce.

Part 2

1. Preheat oven to 350° now or 35 minutes before serving.
2. While cold, cut the brisket across the grain into slices 1/4" to 1/2" thick as you prefer. Arrange slices in a casserole.
3. Slice sweet onions very thinly. Sauté in a skillet on medium high heat, stirring, until browned and caramelized.
4. While cooking onions, put 1 cup wine and 1 cup dried cherries in a sauce pan.
5. Bring to a boil and then simmer over low heat to reduce the wine by half.
6. When wine is reduced, stir in saved sauce. Heat it and season with salt and pepper as needed.
7. Spread caramelized onions over brisket.
8. Pour sauce over brisket slowly to allow it to seep down. Sprinkle with ¼ cup uncooked dried cherries.
9. Heat through in oven, about 15-20 minutes.
10. Serve hot.

Serves 6 to 8. This recipe can be halved.