

Braised Oxtail Ragu w/ Chanterelle Mushrooms

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 1 hour | Total Time: 6 hours

Chef's Notes

Not only is this delicious poured over any type of pasta or polenta, it also makes a great filling for stuffed pasta, such as ravioli.

Any leftovers can be stored in the refrigerator for a few days. It can also be frozen.

Step 1: Searing the Oxtail

- 5 lb oxtails (2" to 3" -inch pieces)*
- kosher salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)
- 4 to 8 tbsp grapeseed oil

To start, preheat the oven to 200°F (95°C). You can cook this dish at a higher temperature if you like, but we like the slow and low approach for braising meats. Refer to the lesson on Braising.

Next, heat a suitable-sized pot over medium-high heat. In the meantime, liberally season the oxtail with salt and pepper. Once the pot is hot, add the oil and sear the meat on all sides until nicely browned. You may have to sear in batches. As the meat browns, you can jump ahead to the next step and prepare the mirepoix.

Once the meat is done, remove it from the pot and set it aside while you caramelize the mirepoix.

Step 2: Preparing & Caramelizing the Mirepoix

- 1 large onion
- 3 stalks celery
- 1 large carrot
- 5 cloves garlic
- 1 to 2 tbsp grapeseed oil, if needed
- 3 tbsp all-purpose flour

To prepare the mirepoix, roughly chop all of the vegetables and mince the garlic.

With the heat at about medium-high, add the oil, followed by the onions, celery and carrots. Once the mirepoix has browned a bit, add the garlic and cook for another 30 seconds or so.

Lastly, sprinkle or singler the mirepoix with the flour, making sure there is enough oil in the pot so the flour doesn't burn. Let it cook for about a minute.

Step 3: Deglazing & Adding Remaining Ingredients

- 1 cup red wine
- 1 cup crushed tomatoes (14 oz can)
- 1 large sprig of rosemary
- 2 bay leaves
- 6 sprigs of fresh Italian parsley
- 2 sprigs of fresh thyme

Next, deglaze with the red wine. Add the crushed tomatoes and bouquet garni.

Step 4: Adding the Meat & Adjusting the Liquid

- approx. 2 cups dark stock (or other liquid)
- Place the meat back on top of the mirepoix, in a single layer and then cover two-thirds full with stock, red wine or even water.

Bring this to a simmer. Cover and then transfer to the oven.

Step 5: Cooking the Ragu

Cook the ragu for about 3 to 6 hours or until the meat is fork tender.

Make Ahead Note: If you like, you can cool the dish once it has cooked and then refrigerate it for the next day. The next day, remove the excess fat from the surface and then gently reheat.

If making and serving the same day, be sure to remove any excess fat from the surface.

Step 6: Finishing the Sauce

- kosher salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

At this point, you can either puree the mirepoix into the sauce (remember to remove the bouquet garni first) or you can strain it for a more refined look and taste. If straining, be sure to press out any excess flavor and liquid from the mirepoix.

To finish the sauce, check the consistency. If needed, add a bit of roux or slurry. Add it bit by bit until you reach the desired consistency.

Next, check for seasoning, adding more salt or pepper as needed.

Step 7: Breaking up the Meat

Break up the meat into large chunks and place into the sauce. Gently fold together and keep warm while you prepare the mushrooms.

Step 8: Preparing & Cooking the Mushrooms

- 1 lb chanterelle mushrooms*
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 tbsp grapeseed oil
- kosher salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

To prepare the mushrooms, first clean them and then cut them into large, bite-size pieces.

*Note: Button, crimini or other wild mushrooms (i.e. porcini) or any combination can be used. You can also use dried wild mushrooms. If using dried mushrooms, rehydrate them first and add them to the sauce once it is strained (if you don't plan to strain the sauce then the mushrooms can be added directly to the ragu as it cooks, no need to rehydrate). Of course, you can always leave the mushrooms out altogether, if you like.

Next, heat a large stainless-steel pan over medium-high heat. Add the oil and butter followed by the mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Saute for about 5 minutes or until the mushrooms have released all of their excess moisture and started to brown/caramelize slightly.

Step 9: Serving the Ragu

To serve the ragu, fold the mushrooms into the braised meat and serve with your favorite pasta. This dish is great with semolina gnocchi or creamy polenta.