

## **Ox cheek and red wine linguini**

With Winter closing in and the weather getting colder, it's time to start cooking some of those winter warmers. This dish covers all those comfort food factors, filling pasta, meaty goodness and a rich sauce. Thus dish takes a little while to cook but it's worth it. For me this dish is a nicer way of making a ragu, instead of everything being minced as this dish will give you lovely flaked bits of meat and a lovely texture. This style of sauce is often found in the mountainous north of Italy where the weather is cooler and the food more hearty.

### **Ingredients**

600g ox cheek  
2 medium carrots  
3 sticks of celery  
1 small bulb of fennel  
3 medium shallots  
4 clove garlic  
Sprig of thyme  
2 bay leaf  
200ml red wine  
1 tub of sandys game stock  
1 tbs tomato puree  
50g butter  
3 tbs olive oil  
360g dry number 13 linguini

### **Tip:**

If the sauce gets a little too thick use some hot cooking water from the pasta. This will also help to season the dish, binding the sauce to the pasta. The pasta takes about 10mins to cook, but don't be afraid of taking the pasta out about a minute before it's ready and finish cooking it in the sauce to enable the pasta to absorb the flavours of the sauce. It is important to use the right amount of salt to pasta to water. 10-100-1000. That's the ratio of salt to pasta to water. So, 10 grams of salt is the right amount to cook 100 grams of pasta in 1000 millilitres of water (1000 ml = 1 litre).

### **Recipe:**

- Wash and roughly chop the celery, carrot, shallot and fennel, about the size of your thumb nail, then crush the cloves of garlic and mix in the thyme and bay.
- In a heavy bottomed deep frying pan or stew pot heat half the butter and the olive oil until the butter starts to foam but control the heat so you don't burn the butter, the oil will help but not stop it from burning.
- Season the ox cheek with plenty of salt and pepper and brown off on all sides in the pan with the butter and oil when it has a lovely deep brown colour, remove from the pan set aside
- Fry off the veg until golden brown in the same pan.
- Add the tomato puree to the veg for a few minutes then add your red wine. Keep stirring and reduce by about half or until it looks like a loose paste. Add the stock and return the meat to the pot bringing to the boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until the meat is tender and almost falling apart. This can take up to 3 hours.
- When the meat is cooked, remove from the pan, pass the sauce through a fine sieve into a clean pan and reduce by about half until it's a little sticky. Do a taste test and when you think its rich enough add a touch more salt and pepper.
- Shred the meat which should just fall apart and mix with the sauce.
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### To finish

- Get your water measured out with the salt and bring to the boil
- Add your pasta and cook for about 9 minutes
- In this time start to bring the sauce up to the boil gently
- When the sauce is boiling reduce the heat
- Now the pasta should almost be cooked add it to the sauce, if the sauce is too thick use a little of the pasta water to loosen it up
- At the last minute add in the other half of the butter off the heat stirring it in
- Plate and finish with fresh finely grated parmesan and some finely chopped parsley

