

Slow-Cooker Vietnamese Beef Pho

Serves 4

Adapted from [Hai Vuong's Beef Pho](#) recipe in the Wall Street Journal, this version utilizes a slow cooker in place of simmering the broth on the stove. While the broth lacks the weight of broths made in the traditional manner, the ease of preparation makes this one downside easy to overlook.

While I did not use them in this recipe, mung bean sprouts, fresh mint, and fresh thai basil all make delicious toppings. Each of these ingredients should be offered to guests at the table to be added according to personal preference.

For the broth:

2 lbs beef marrow bones, well rinsed
2 1/2 lbs boneless beef brisket, fat left on
1 (4-inch) piece of ginger
1/2 yellow onion
4 whole star anise
3 whole cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1 teaspoon whole coriander seeds
1 teaspoon whole back peppercorns
3 quarts water
2 teaspoons granulated sugar, more if needed
2 teaspoons salt, more if needed
Freshly ground black pepper, if needed
Special equipment: slow cooker, cheesecloth, fine mesh strainer

For the soup:

3/4 lb sirloin or filet mignon
1 (16-ounce) package dried rice vermicelli noodles
1 cup fresh cilantro leaves
4 green onions, ends trimmed, white and green parts thinly sliced
1 Serrano chili, thinly sliced
1 lime, cut into wedges
Sriracha hot sauce, for serving
Hoisin sauce, for serving

Preheat the broiler and place a rack in the top third of the oven.

Fill a large pot with 1-inch of water and bring to a boil. Add the bones and brisket to the pot and cover. Steam, covered, for 15 minutes. Remove the bones and brisket from the pot with tongs and place them in a slow cooker.

Place the halved yellow onion, cut side up, and the ginger (skin left on) on a baking sheet. Broil for 5 to 8 minutes until the onion is just charred and the skin of the ginger is blackened. Add the charred onion to the slow cooker. Let the ginger cool then remove the blackened skin using your fingers and place it in the slow cooker as well.

Toast the star anise, cloves, cinnamon stick, coriander seeds, and peppercorns in a small skillet over medium heat until fragrant. Add them to the slow cooker and cover everything with 3 quarts of water. **Note:** Don't overfill your slow cooker. If you can't add the full 3 quarts of water, don't worry. Just add as much as you can and leave it at that. Liquid doesn't evaporate as much from your slow cooker as it would from a stockpot.

Cook on low for 12 hours. After 12 hours, use tongs to remove the brisket. Let cool then refrigerate until ready to use. Use the tongs to remove and discard the bones. Line a fine mesh strainer with cheesecloth and strain the broth into a storage container. Let the broth cool and then refrigerate the broth until ready to use. If using immediately, skim the fat from the broth using a slotted spoon.

When ready to prepare the pho, remove the broth from the refrigerator. Remove the congealed fat from the broth and reheat the broth in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir in the sugar and salt once the broth begins to simmer. Remove the brisket from the refrigerator and shred it, avoiding the fat. The fat can be discarded and the shredded brisket should be added to the broth.

Bring a medium pot of water to boil. Add the rice vermicelli noodles and cook for 4 to 5 minutes or as instructed on the package. Drain the noodles and rinse with cold water to stop the cooking process. Divide the cooked noodles between four bowls.

Slice the sirloin into thin strips making sure to slice against the grain. You can place the sirloin in the freezer for 20 minutes before slicing to make this easier.

Taste the broth and adjust the seasonings as needed. The raw sirloin can be placed in the bowls (if sliced thinly enough it will cook when the hot broth is added) or can be added to the broth and cooked briefly before serving. Ladle the broth and beef over the noodles and serve the pho with the cilantro, sliced green onion, serrano, and lime wedges. Sriracha hot sauce and hoisin sauce also make great accompaniments. Enjoy.