



Rich slow-cooked brisket with tomatoes and creamy polenta

This is a hearty and umami-packed version of a classic Italian braised meat with cheesy, creamy polenta by Charmaine Katz. Slow cooking is the way to a stress-free life, giving you maximum reward for less effort. Take your time to extract as much flavour out of each step as possible. Brown the meat, sweat the soffritto to within an inch of its life, then let it all cook in the oven for 4 hours or so. The braised beef will get richer and deeper a day later as the flavours meld, so make extra if you want leftovers.

Gluten free

Serves	Course	Prepare	Cook	Total time
6	Main meal	10 mins	4 hrs 30 mins	4 hrs 40 mins

Ingredients

Essential British Beef Rolled Brisket (typical weight 750g), cut into 4-6 pieces

1 tbsp Essential Vegetable Oil

20g butter

½ x 500g pack frozen Cooks' Ingredients Soffritto Mix

6 cloves garlic, crushed

6 anchovies, drained, to taste

1 sprig/s rosemary

2 sprig/s fresh thyme

200ml red wine

2 x 400g cans Mutti Peeled Whole Plum Tomatoes

Pinch caster sugar, if needed

For the polenta

500ml whole milk, depending on how you like it

200g quick cook polenta

1½ tsp salt, or to taste

50g unsalted butter

50g Parmigiano Reggiano, finely grated, plus extra to serve

Pinch ground white pepper

Method

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4. Put a large casserole (enough to hold the beef and liquid)

over a medium-high heat. Season the beef generously with salt all over, add the oil to the pan, then brown the beef in batches, on all sides. Once done, set aside on a plate and season generously with black pepper.

2 Deglaze the pan with a little water to scrape up any browned bits from the bottom, and reserve this liquid (unless it tastes burnt, and if so, discard). Melt the butter in the pan over a low heat, add the soffritto mix with a generous pinch of salt and sweat for 15-20 minutes, until soft, golden and smelling fragrant.

3 Increase the heat to medium, add the garlic, anchovies, rosemary and thyme and cook for a few minutes, stirring occasionally, until the anchovies melt into the soffritto.

4 Add the red wine, and allow to reduce by half, then add the plum tomatoes and break up with a wooden spoon. Bring to a simmer, then nestle in the browned brisket pieces so they are half-covered, then add the meat resting juices and reserved pan liquid. Cover with a piece of baking parchment so it's tucked in and protected, then put the lid on and cook in the oven for 4 hours to 4 hours 30 minutes, until the meat is soft and tender. Add a splash of water if it seems dry. Season to taste, adding a touch of sugar if the sauce is a little tart.

5 When the beef is ready, put 650ml water and 350ml milk into a large saucepan, season with the salt and bring to a simmer. It should taste overtly salty. Slowly whisk in the polenta, whisking constantly to avoid lumps. The polenta will thicken quickly and come away from the sides in around 3-5 minutes.

6 Off the heat, stir in the butter, parmesan and white pepper, then whisk to combine. Add more milk for a looser consistency if needed. I like this polenta to be looser and to fall off a spoon when serving, so it soaks up the sauciness of the beef. Serve a large dollop of polenta with plenty of beef and sauce, with more cheese.

Cook's tip

This is a slow cook recipe, so the right cooking temperature is crucial. If using a fan oven, cook your brisket at around 140-160 degrees, as oven temperatures vary.

And to drink...

Paolo Leo Primitivo di Manduria

‘A plush, plump, velvety red from the sun-kissed south of Italy, packed with red cherry and mocha flavours. This has won 4.5 star ratings on Waitrose Cellar and great reviews’ – Rebecca Hull, buyer

Nutritional

Typical values per serving when made using specific products in recipe

Energy	2,923kj/ 701kcal
Fat	41.7g
Saturated Fat	19.9g
Carbohydrates	35.9g
Sugars	10.7g
Fibre	2.4g
Protein	38.2g
Salt	2.5g