

Beef Brisket & Porcini Lasagne



Revised Brisket Recipe

I have been meaning to do something with the fabulous cut of Beef Brisket for quite a while. Why? Cheap, full of flavour and just like the Pulled Pork Lasagne on the website, it is largely a set and forget type meal. Bung it in the slow cooker in the morning, come home to a house where the smell makes you drool as you enter the door and all you have to do is make a béchamel, pull the beef apart and assemble the lasagne. Brilliant! Your kids will also love you for this one and if they don't like mushrooms, don't tell them they are in it and believe me, they will never know.....

You can also do the Beef Brisket in the oven, same process but in a casserole dish with a tight fitting lid. Pop the oven on about 150°C and cook for 4 1/2 to 5 hours, stirring and turning the beef periodically. The brisket is ready when it literally falls apart. The pressure cooker is another fabulous method of cooking the Beef Brisket portion of this dish. It will need about an hour and half on high pressure. Make sure you brown your brisket for maximum flavour before hand.

Prep time: 40 Minutes

Cooking time: 8 Hours on low

\$\$ Medium Budget

Serves 8 large portions and is suitable to freeze

Olive oil for frying

1.2kg of beef brisket, trimmed of excess fat but leave some for flavour

4 cloves of garlic, finely minced

2 brown onions, diced

20gm of dried porcini mushrooms, soaked in boiling water for 15 minutes

3 large portobello mushrooms, diced

1/2 bunch of thyme, tied with string

1.5 cups of red wine

700ml of tomato pasta

1/2 cup of tomato paste

1 tbs of balsamic vinegar

1 tsp of sugar

Sea salt and cracked pepper

1 1/2 packets of Latina fresh lasagne sheets (freeze the leftover in a ziplock bag for next time)

1 cup of tasty cheese

1/2 a cup of grated parmesan

Thyme leaves for garnish

For the Béchamel:

80gm of butter

1/2 a cup of plain flour

4 cups of milk

1/2 tsp of grated nutmeg (fresh is best but dried will do)

1/2 a cup of freshly grated parmesan

Sea salt and black pepper

Once the porcini's have soaked for 15 minutes, drain them and set aside the liquid for later use. Finely chop the porcini and set aside.

Heat a large heavy based frypan. Rub the beef brisket with a little oil and season generously with salt and pepper. Place it in the pan and allow to caramelise for 4 minutes either side or until golden. Remove from the pan and place it in the slow cooker. Set the temp to high, just to get it going and then turn to low when you add the sauce.

In the same pan, add a little more oil if needed and lightly fry the onion until soft. Add the garlic, mushrooms and porcini along with the bundle of thyme and continue to fry until the mushrooms are softening. Pour in the wine and allow to reduce for 3-4 minutes before adding the passata, 1 cup of the porcini liquid, balsamic vinegar and the tomato paste. Season with salt, pepper and sugar and stir to combine. Allow the mixture to simmer for 5 minutes. Give the sauce another stir and then pour it over the top of the

Beef Brisket in the slow cooker. Place a sheet of baking paper on top of the sauce, this helps to keep the moisture in. Pop the lid on and leave for 8 hours. If you are home, give it an occasional stir but if not, just make sure the brisket is fully immersed in the sauce.

To make the bechamel, melt the butter in a large saucepan. While the butter is melting, season with salt and pepper and add the grated nutmeg. Once the butter is melted and bubbling, sprinkle over the flour. Mix well with a whisk and allow the mixture to cook for a minute or two, before adding the milk a little at a time and continuing to whisk. The mixture will thicken very quickly so keep whisking to avoid lumps. When all the milk is added to the mixture, allow it to come up to a simmer before adding the parmesan.

Stir right into the corner of the pan until the cheese has melted and set aside.

To pull the Beef Brisket apart, remove it (leaving the sauce behind) from the slow cooker and place it in a shallow baking dish. Remove the thyme sprigs too and discard. All of the leaves will be left behind in the sauce. Use a couple of forks to pull the brisket apart into nice mouth manageable chunks so that it is lovely and stringy. It should literally fall apart. Once shredded, return the beef to the sauce in the slow cooker and stir well to combine.

Pre heat the oven to 180°. To assemble the lasagne, coat the bottom of a large lasagne dish with a little olive oil. Lay the lasagne sheets on the bottom in a single layer (I cut my sheets to fit so there are no gaps) and top with a third of the beef mixture, spread out evenly. Top with more lasagne sheets and spread over a third of the bechamel. Top with lasagne and repeat the process two more times so the top layer is bechamel. Sprinkle over the cheeses and thyme leaves and bake in the oven for 40-45 minutes or until golden brown and bubbling. Remove the lasagne from the oven and allow it to rest for approximately 10 minutes (cover with a piece of foil if you wish). Allowing it to rest makes it a lot easier to serve. Divide the lasagne into 8 generous portions and serve with a crisp green salad.

The last time I made this dish, I made the pasta from scratch. To do this you really need a pasta machine to be able to get the sheets thin enough. If you have a machine, I am assuming that you have made pasta before but the method I use is 1 egg per 100gm of flour. For this particular dish I used 5 eggs to 500gm of flour, mixed together until combined in a large bowl and then wrapped in cling wrap and refrigerated for half an hour before rolling out in the pasta machine. It was absolutely divine and I am going to find it difficult to go back to packet pasta, although for convenience sake there is no doubt that I will. If you have the time and the inclination, I highly recommend giving it a go.

Do you have dried porcini left over? Perhaps you could make this....

<https://emsfoodforfriends.com.au/italian-sausage-wild-mushroom-chianti-risotto/>

