



## Barbacoa Beef Cheeks



Beef cheeks are one of our favourite cuts. The meat is intense, full of robust flavour and has a richness that is not at all cloying. Don't be put off by what might seem like a bizarre combination of ingredients; this recipe is a cinch, and it takes very little time to prepare. The recipe serves four, but our recommendation is that you make a larger batch and invite over your friends to watch a match, have a few drinks and shoot the breeze. An Irish artisan cider such as Stonewell would go nicely.

### Ingredients

- ♦ 1 kg beef cheeks, trimmed
  - ♦ 1 ancho chilli
  - ♦ 4 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
  - ♦ 1 tablespoon peanut butter
  - ♦ 1 teaspoon instant espresso powder
  - ♦ 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil or Irish rapeseed oil
  - ♦ 2 tablespoons Highbank apple syrup or maple syrup or honey
  - ♦ 2 tsp ground cumin
  - ♦ 1 tsp smoked paprika
  - ♦ 1 handful fresh coriander, chopped
  - ♦ 1 teaspoon salt
  - 250 ml chicken stock
  - ♦ 4 limes
- To Serve:
- ♦ 2 avocados, peeled and sliced (or guacamole)
  - ♦ 4 wraps or tortillas
  - ♦ roasted tomato salsa
  - ♦ fresh coriander
  - ♦ sour cream
  - ♦ grated cheese — a strongly flavoured Cheddar-type such as Hegarty's from Whitechurch, Co. Cork

Serves 4

### To Cook

Remove the stem and seeds from the ancho chilli, chop it roughly and put it in a little warm water for a few minutes to rehydrate. Blend the chilli (and its water), garlic, peanut butter, espresso powder, 2 tablespoons of the oil, syrup, cumin, paprika, coriander and salt into a paste. Marinate the beef cheeks in the paste for a few hours, preferably overnight, in the fridge. Preheat the oven to 140 C/ fan 120 C/gas mark 11/2. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a flameproof casserole dish and brown the cheeks on both sides. Don't move the cheeks around too much when you're browning them — the less they move, the more colour and flavour they'll pick up. Pour the rest of the marinade into the pan with the stock, then squeeze in the juice of 3 limes. Put the lid on and place in the oven for about 3 1/2 hours, turning the cheeks once or twice while they cook. If the liquid dries up, add a little more stock. By now the cheeks should be very tender. Pull them apart with two forks and mix with the juices in the pan. Add a squeeze of lime to taste, and a touch more syrup if you like. Serve the barbacoa in a wrap or corn tortilla with guacamole or slices of avocado, roasted tomato salsa, sour cream, a sprinkling of fresh coriander and grated cheese.