



SECOND PLACE WINNER

Venezuelan Black Roast Beef

Submitted by Thomas González Roberts '16

“Growing up as half-Venezuelan and half-American in the icy tundra of Minnesota has affected every part of my life. Lucky for me (and hopefully for you, too), cooking is no exception.

My mom taught me to cook early in my childhood. She would treat us to warm *arepas* on Saturday mornings and traditional *hallacas* and hambread near Christmas. I learned each of these recipes and others as I made them again and again for the rest of my family. I was very satisfied with my repertoire of dishes, having mastered most of my favorite foods. But still one eluded me: the black roast beef. The extra overnight preparation and the tricky combination of ingredients proved too difficult for my little hands...and I was never successful. Even today, I have never tried a version as sweet as my mom's; including her mom, who taught her. Maybe Princeton's Dining Services can prove to be stiffer competition!

Moving from Minnesota to Princeton has proven difficult in many departments, but one thing stands out above all. Princeton has tested my definition of “home.” Without the smells of *caracas negras* and fried plantains, something is distinctly out of place. I love the food at Wilcox, but I think everyone at Princeton deserves a taste of my little corner of the world. Perhaps we can make that happen! I'd love to welcome thousands of students here, in my new home, to my old home.

My mom keeps reminding me to say that the plantains are *key.*” -Thomas González Roberts '16

Ingredients

1 kg of eye-round beef
2 onions, grated
2 red peppers, grated
3 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
2 tbsp vegetable oil
2 tbsp sugar
3 to 4 cups of water

Method of Preparation

The night previous to preparing this dish, place the beef in a glass container or in a large resealable bag and marinate with the salt, pepper, onions, red peppers and Worcestershire sauce, cover with plastic wrap or seal bag well and leave in the fridge overnight.

The next morning, remove the beef from the marinade, reserve the marinade in a bowl adding approximately 3 to 4 cups of water. Heat the oil in a pot, add the sugar and add the beef (if the cut is too big you can cut into two pieces). Brown the beef until dark or “black” on all sides (this takes approximately 20 minutes, you'll need to move the beef every 5 minutes or so to make sure all sides are ‘blackened’ properly), do not cover the pot (this is when the splatter-fest begins). Once the beef is “black” on all sides, add some of the marinade and water you've previously set aside, making sure you don't cover the entire cut of beef, only up to half or so. If it starts drying out simply add more of the marinade-water, cook for approximately 2 hours, moving the beef once in a while to make sure all sides cook evenly. Once ready take the beef out of the pot, let it cool for a bit and then cut into thin slices. Place the slices back in the pot which now should have a dark, thick and sort of chunky sauce. Serve with white rice and *tajadas* (fried ripe plantains, putting some of the sauce on top of the beef and rice).