



BRAISED BISON WITH CAULIFLOWER MASH

SERVINGS: 4

ACTIVE TIME: 1 hr

TOTAL TIME: 2.5 hrs

If you are feeling a bit bored with the usual trio of meat commonly found in the local grocery store, chicken, pork and beef, it is high time you gave bison a try! This Braised Bison with Roasted Garlic and Cauliflower Mash recipe will make you feel good from in the inside out. Bison is leaner, and oftentimes cheaper than beef, and has rich delicious flavor packed into every bite. There is a whole world of meat out there waiting for you, so be bold!

Ingredients

For the Bison

- > 2 lbs. bison chuck or sirloin
- > 2 large carrots
- > 1 large onion
- > 3 cups beef stock
- > 8 cloves of garlic
- > 1 tablespoon thyme
- > 1 tablespoon rosemary
- > 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar

For the Mash

- > 1 small head of cauliflower
- > 1 head of garlic
- > 1 cup chicken stock

Directions

1. Begin by breaking down the bison and vegetables in the “For the Braised Bison” section. Wash and peel the carrots and then cut into large rounds. Peel and quarter the onion. Trim the root ends off the garlic and smash (no need to cut down smaller) using the broad side of your knife to release the oils. Cut the bison meat down into 2 or 3 chunks (the size should be somewhere in between a chunk you’d put on a kabob and a small steak).
2. Preheat a large cast iron skillet, or other skillet with at least 3 to 4 high sides, over high heat. Add a drizzle of oil (the pan should be so hot that the oil starts smoking nearly immediately) and sear the chunks of bison. Add salt to the meat and then flip the bison halfway through to sear the other side, about 2 to 3 minutes per side. Use tongs or a slotted spoon to transfer the seared pieces of bison to a plate for a moment. Allow the pan to warm up again and then add in the carrots and onions and allow them to brown for 3 or 4 minutes, doing your best to get some good color on the vegetables. After four minutes or so, add the garlic, rosemary and thyme to the pan and stir constantly for a minute to soften the garlic and wake up the spices.
3. After the garlic and spices have been added and cooked for a minute, return the bison to the pan along with any accumulated juices. Next add the beef stock and several cracks of black pepper. Allow the liquid to briefly come to a boil and immediately lower the heat to low and cover. Allow the bison to simmer for

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Shopping List

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| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 lbs. bison chuck or sirloin | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 cups beef stock | <input type="checkbox"/> rosemary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 large carrots | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 heads of garlic | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 small head of cauliflower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 large onion | <input type="checkbox"/> thyme | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 cup chicken stock |

two hours until the meat is very tender and flavor. Flip the chunks of bison over halfway through the braise so that they cook evenly.

4. While the bison is simmering, it's time to start preparing the mash. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Trim off the very bottom of the head of garlic. Tear off a square of tin foil and drizzle a little bit of olive oil in the center. Place the cut side of the garlic onto the oil and move around to ensure even coverage. Drizzle a little more oil over the top of the head and then wrap tightly in the foil. Flip the cauliflower over onto a cutting board and trim off the leaves and the root end of the cauliflower. I find the trying to cut a "cone" into the center of the cauliflower does a good job of getting the stem out in one shot. Line a baking sheet with tin foil and grab a mixing bowl. As we will be mashing this later, don't try to make florets out of the cauliflower. Instead, try to cut half inch slabs out of the cauliflower, break into smaller more manageable pieces and then toss them into the mixing bowl. Once all of the cauliflower is in the bowl, add some olive oil and salt and toss to coat. Pour the bowl out onto your baking sheet and spread around to make one even layer. Roast the garlic and the cauliflower in the oven for 35 minutes or until the cauliflower is golden brown and softened.
5. In a small saucepan, warm up the cup of chicken stock over medium heat. If you care to infuse the chicken stock with additional flavors, such as some rosemary or thyme, now would be the time. While the stock is heating up, toss the roasted cauliflower into a mixing bowl and squeeze out the roasted garlic cloves into the mixing bowl as well. Add a little bit, say a quarter cup at a time, of the

chicken stock to the bowl and use a large fork or potato masher to mash the veggies and incorporate the stock. Continue adding stock until you find the consistency that is right for you. If you dump the whole cup in all at once, you may find that the mash is too loose for your liking. As it is difficult to know exactly how much each head of cauliflower will yield, there is no exact science to the amount of chicken stock you'll use, so just do a little bit at a time until it looks to your liking.

6. After the bison has been braising for two hours, remove the lid and check to see if the meat is as tender as you would like. Depending on how large or small you cut the bison, it may need a little more time but two hours should be enough. I generally test for tenderness by taking two forks and trying to pull a piece of bison apart. If the meat gives way easily, you are ready to eat. At this time I will also usually add a tablespoon of red wine vinegar to balance the rich meaty flavors with a little acid to brighten up the flavor of the dish. Transfer the pieces of bison to a serving bowl using a slotted spoon and then add a little bit of the cooking liquid to the bowl to help keep the meat moist. Loosely tent the bowl to keep the bison warm while you prepare the sauce.
7. Pour the remainder of the cooking liquid into a small sauce pot using a fine mesh strainer to remove the veggie from the sauce and discard them - they have done their duty. Heat the liquid over medium heat and reduce a little bit. Give it a taste and make any necessary adjustments (add salt and pepper, or more herbs, a bit of butter, and so on). Pour into a serving bowl and serve along side the bison and mash. Garnish everything with some chives or scallions and serve immediately.



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