

03/20/11 - Avicas con Carne

White Beans with Short ribs

For some strange reason the weather has turned unseasonably cold again in Los Angeles. Although many would laugh at our (Los Angelinos) notion of 'cold', I don't recall many times in the last 35 years when it has rained in Los Angeles in March. The birds are chirping, the air is thick with the perfume of flowers, and there is an ambient sound of buzzing bees, the gloom just doesn't cut it.

In spite of my habit to switch menus to lighter spring fare by this time of year, I had the urge to cook something earthy and warm. I found some short ribs in the freezer and everyone loves white beans, Avicas, or some call them Fasulia. This is great for a week night dinner that you can cook in the morning, reheat, and serve. Make a salad and pick up some crusty bread.

4 pieces of short ribs cut about 1 to 2 inches thick

Salt and fresh cracked pepper

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 onion, diced

3-4 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed

1 bunch of parsley, washed, dried, and chopped

2 tsp Sumac

2 tsp turmeric

2 teaspoons Baharat

1 14 ounce can chopped tomatoes

1 16 ounce bag great northern beans (one pound), rinsed and checked

3-4 quarts water



Take each long piece of short rib and cut it into 3 or 4 pieces. Preheat a heavy bottomed Dutch oven on high heat, add the olive oil and begin to sear the short ribs. Season the short ribs with salt and pepper while searing. When a gold crust has developed, they will still be raw on the inside, remove the short rib pieces and set aside.

Turn the heat down a little to medium, add the onions and garlic. Stir the onions and garlic with a wooden spoon and when they are translucent, add the parsley. Season the onions, garlic and parsley with salt and pepper then add the Sumac, turmeric and Baharat. Add in the tomatoes. Next, place the seared short ribs and any juice that collected back in the pot.



Now add the beans and then water. Place the lid on the pot ajar. When the whole thing comes to a boil reduce the heat and simmer for one hour. Place the lid on so no steam is escaping any longer and simmer for another two hours. It is a good idea to check half way through and make sure you like the thickness of the dish and that it is not sticking. You may have to add a little more water. You can substitute chicken stock for all or part of the water. The beans should be super soft and the meat falling off the born fork tender. This dish is often served on top of rice.



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