Braised Tri-Tip with Red Wine Gravy

There's nothing quite like the smell of a roast slowly braising away in the oven. This is one of my favorite dinners to make because it fills the whole house with the most incredible smell, and the hardest part is having the patience to wait for it to finish cooking!

The tri-tip comes out incredibly tender, with a rich red wine gravy and vegetables that have been soaking up all that flavor for hours. And there are so many ways to serve it! I've made this with mashed potatoes, mashed sweet potatoes, patatas bravas, and even just the vegetables it cooks with. Next, I need to try creamy polenta!

Servings: Approximately 6
Braising time: A little over 3 hours
Oven temperature: 325°F

Ingredients

- 2.5–3 lb tri-tip roast
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, sliced
- 4 carrots, cut into large chunks
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 cup dry red wine, such as Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot
- 2 (32 oz) cartons beef broth
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
- Optional: An extra splash of red wine for finishing the gravy
- Optional: Cornstarch and cold water, for thickening

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven.

Preheat your oven to 325°F.

2. Season the tri-tip.

Pat the tri-tip dry with paper towels and season generously with salt and black pepper.

3. Sear the meat.

Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Pat the meat completely dry. Sear the tri-tip for about 4 minutes per side, until a nice brown crust forms. Remove from the pot and set aside.

4. Cook the vegetables.

Add the onion, carrots, and celery to the same pot. Cook until they begin to soften and pick up some color, stirring occasionally.

Tip: If you plan to serve the vegetables alongside the tri-tip, cut your carrots into nice big chunks so they have a better chance of holding their shape during the long braise. If you want to save time, you can always use pre-chopped veggies though. I used pre-chopped onions and celery here!

5. Add the garlic and tomato paste.

Stir in the minced garlic and tomato paste. Cook for another minute, until fragrant.

6. Deglaze with red wine.

Pour in the red wine, scraping up all those delicious browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Let it simmer for a few minutes.

7. Add the braising liquid.

Pour in the beef broth, then add the bay leaves, thyme, and rosemary. Return the seared tri-tip to the pot.

8. Slow-braise.

Cover the Dutch oven with its lid and transfer it to the oven. Braise at 325°F for a little over 3 hours, or until the meat is incredibly tender and pulls apart easily with a fork.

9. Make the red wine gravy.

Once the meat is done, carefully remove it from the pot and set it aside to rest. Remove the herb stems and bay leaves, then use a strainer or sieve to separate the cooked vegetables from the braising liquid. Set the vegetables aside to serve with the tri-tip.

Return the strained braising liquid to the pot and let it simmer uncovered to reduce and concentrate the flavors.

Optional: Add another little splash to the simmering liquid! I did this on a whim while sipping on a glass as I was finishing up dinner and loved the extra depth it gave the gravy. Just let it simmer for a few minutes to cook down.

For a thicker gravy, mix a little cornstarch with cold water to make a slurry, then gradually stir it into the simmering liquid until you reach your desired consistency. Taste and adjust with salt and pepper as needed.

Serve the tri-tip with the braised vegetables and spoon plenty of that rich red wine gravy over everything!

Corinne's Tips

Switch up the sides!

One of my favorite things about this recipe is how versatile it is. Here are a few ways I've served it:

- **Mashed potatoes:** A classic for soaking up all that gravy.
- **Mashed sweet potatoes:** A little sweetness pairs beautifully with the rich, savory beef.
- **Patatas bravas:** Crispy potatoes with a little Spanish-inspired flair.
- **Braised vegetables:** The carrots, onions, and celery cook right alongside the meat and soak up so much flavor.
- **Potatoes in the braise:** Add large chunks of potatoes to the pot during cooking so they become tender and flavorful along with the other vegetables.
- **Creamy polenta:** I haven't tried this one yet, but it's next on my list!

Make the gravy your own.

You can let the braising liquid reduce naturally for a thinner, more concentrated gravy, or thicken it with a cornstarch slurry if you prefer something that really coats the meat.

No red wine?

You can skip the wine altogether! With all that beef broth and those flavorful aromatics, you'll still have a delicious braise. Just add 1–2 teaspoons of red wine vinegar or balsamic vinegar to the gravy at the end, tasting as you go, if you want a little extra depth and acidity.

A little patience goes a long way.

Most of the cooking time is completely hands-off. Just let the oven do its thing, enjoy the smell filling your kitchen, and try not to sneak too many tastes before dinner!