

Did You Know?

Star anise, native to southern China and northern Vietnam, is a mahogany-colored, 8-pointed star shaped fruit of an evergreen plant, *Illicium verum*. This fruit, and the seeds contained within each of its arms, has a licorice and anise-like flavor but is unrelated to the fennel anise we know in the West.

It tastes like a mixture of fennel, clove and a little pepper with some sweetness thrown in. It has a rich, complex flavor that works wonderfully with meat dishes, broths, poached fruit, and masala chai!

It's commonly used in its whole, dried form and sometimes ground. It is an integral part of Chinese Five Spice powder.



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Featured Books



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epls.org/spice-club
January Spice
Star Anise

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Pho Bo (Noodle Soup with Beef)

SERVES 6 to 8



GATHER YOUR INGREDIENTS

- 4.4 lb. (2 kg) beef bones
- 2 oz (50 g) whole fresh ginger
- 1 large yellow onion, skin on
- 3 star anise
- 9 whole cloves
- 9 black peppercorns
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 3 cardamom pods
- 1 lb. (455 g) beef brisket or chuck roast
- 10 cups (2.5 L) water, or more as needed
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) fish sauce
- 3 tbsp (945 g) sugar
- 1 tbsp (915 g) salt
- 2.2 lbs. (1 kg) fresh rice noodles or 1lb. (455 g) dried rice noodles
- 2 cups (120 g) bean sprouts
- 8 oz. (225 g) raw beef filet, like beef tenderloin or beef sirloin, shaved or cut into paper thin slices
- 3 stalks or about 2 tbsp (12 g) green onions thinly sliced
- Fresh cilantro for serving
- 2 red chilis, thinly sliced
- Fresh mint leaves, for serving
- Basil leaves, for serving
- Limes, sliced into wedges, for serving
- Hoisin sauce, for serving
- Chili sauce, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a soup or deep pot place the beef bones with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and cook for about 3 minutes. Drain, then rinse the bones with fresh water. Set Aside.
2. Over an open flame, roast the ginger and the onion until the skin turns dark brown. Alternatively, slice the ginger and onions in half, then roast in a preheated 350°F (175°C) oven for 30 minutes.
3. Toast the star anise, cloves, black peppercorns, cinnamon sticks, and cardamom pods for 1 minute over medium heat in a frying pan, or until fragrant. Place in a small spice fabric bag or cheesecloth and tie with a string to make a small pouch to hold spices.
4. Place the rinsed bones, roasted ginger and onion, beef brisket and the spice bag into a deep soup pot. Pour the water into the pot, bring to a boil, then cover and adjust the heat to low and simmer for at least 4 hours. Remove the brisket after 1 1/2 hours or when it's fork tender. Allow the brisket to cool, then slice into strips. Set aside. After the rest of the broth has been simmering for 4 hours or so, strain the stock with a fine sieve to obtain a clear soup (measures between 8 to 9 cups [1.9 to 2.2 L] of stock). Place the strained stock and the brisket in a new clean pot. Bring to a boil, then simmer over low heat and season with fish sauce, sugar, and salt. Taste and adjust the seasoning if desired. Keep the stock hot.

5. If using dried noodles, cook the noodles in boiling water for 3 to 4 minutes or until soft. Rinse in cold water and drain well. If using fresh noodles, simply blanch in hot water briefly, for 2 to 4 seconds. Drain. Do this in individual batches or portions. Quickly blanch the bean sprouts.
6. Place a portion of the noodles and bean sprouts in each bowl. Top with very thin slices of raw beef filet, green onions and fresh cilantro, then add the hot stock and brisket. Serve with red chilis, a few mint leaves, basil leaves, lime slices and hoisin & chili sauce on the side.

Excerpted with permission from *Rice. Noodles. Yum.* by Abigail Soto Raines published 2019 by Page Street Publishing Co.

Salem, MA

Star Anise Milk

MAKES 2 small servings or 1 mug-sized serving



GATHER YOUR INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) whole milk
- 1 tsp molasses
- 2 whole star anise

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a pot on medium heat, warm milk, molasses, and star anise until mixture just comes to a boil, about 7 minutes, whisking constantly. If the milk becomes frothy and attempts to boil over, remove from heat.
2. Pour into teacups or a mug and serve hot.

Excerpted with permission from *Dutch Feast* by Emily Wright published 2017 by Arsenal Pul Press Vancouver, BC