INDONESIA / WILL'S GOURMET RECIPES

BUNTUT ARES (BALINESE OXTAIL SOUP WITH BANANA TRUNK)

Buntut ares is a Balinese soup of tender oxtail and young banana trunk in a rich bumbu gede broth. Will uses beef oxtail in place of the traditional pork or chicken bones.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	30 min	3 h 20 min	3 h 50 min	Medium	Medium

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE OXTAIL AND STOCK

1 kg beef oxtail, cut into pieces
3 shallots
3 garlic cloves
20 g ginger
1 tsp black peppercorns
2.5 l water

FOR THE BANANA TRUNK

300 g young banana trunk (ares), thinly sliced
1 tbsp salt

FOR THE SOUP

2 tbsp neutral oil
100 g bumbu gede (Balinese base paste)
2 lemongrass stalks, bruised
3 salam leaves
1 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
Salt, to taste

Fried shallots, to serve

METHOD

COOK THE OXTAIL

1 Cover the oxtail with cold water, bring to the boil, then drain and rinse. Return to the pot with fresh water, the shallots, garlic, ginger and peppercorns. Simmer gently for 2 to 2.5 hours, until the meat is soft and tender. Keep the stock.

PREPARE THE BANANA TRUNK

2 Mix the sliced trunk with the salt and leave for 10 minutes. Squeeze out the water and rinse well to remove the salt.

FRY THE BUMBU

3 Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Fry the bumbu gede for 5 to 6 minutes until fragrant, then add the lemongrass, salam, coriander and black pepper.

COMBINE

4 Add the oxtail and mix well. Pour in about 1.5 l of the stock and bring to the boil.

ADD THE ARES

5 Add the banana trunk, cover and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Season with salt.

REST AND SERVE

6 Rest for 20 minutes off the heat so the flavours settle. Reheat, ladle into bowls and top with fried shallots.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

Banana trunk is hard to find outside Southeast Asia. Thinly sliced young bamboo shoot or celery stalk gives a similar bite.

Short rib or beef shin work in place of oxtail. The cut needs to be one that braises.

The bumbu gede can be made a week ahead and frozen in portions.

Will makes buntut ares, a Balinese soup traditionally made with pork or chicken bones. He uses beef oxtail instead, and shows how the young banana trunk (ares) becomes the topping that soaks up the broth.The oxtail is boiled once in clear water, drained and refreshed, then simmered with shallot, garlic, ginger and pepper until soft. The ares is salted for...