



## Ken's Pho: Healthier Vietnamese Beef Noodle Soup

Serves 6-8, or three good dinners for two

- 2 pounds oxtails
- 3 pounds short ribs on the bone
- 1/2 pound beef tendon (see notes)
  - 1 1/2 gallons water
  - 6 cloves
  - 6 star anise
- 1 tablespoon black peppercorns
  - 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 medium onions, peeled and halved
  - 3- inch piece ginger
- 5 tablespoons Thai fish sauce (see notes)
  - 8 ounces buckwheat soba noodles
- 2 pounds chinese broccoli, sliced into 2" pieces
- 1 pound thinly sliced eye of round (see notes)

### Garnish plate:

- 2 cups bean sprouts
- Lime quarters
- 1/2 cup each cilantro, Asian basil (if available; if not, use regular) and mint
- Hoisen sauce and sriracha or other chili paste

Make the stock: In a large soup pot, place the oxtails, short ribs, tendon, water, cloves, anise, peppercorns and cinnamon. Char the onions and ginger over an open flame with tongs, or in a heavy pan if you don't have gas (or you're scared). Add to pot and bring to a boil and reduce heat so it simmers. Every once in a while, when you think of it, skim any scum or other stuff off the top. Simmer about 2 hours, then add the fish sauce. Continue simmering until meats are very tender, maybe an hour and a half more. Remove from heat and strain into another pot, reserving meats. When meat is cool enough to handle, remove oxtail and short rib meat from bones. Slice short rib meat and tendon thinly. Skim any fat off the broth.

While meats are cooking, add soba noodles to pot of boiling water. Bring back to boil and cook noodles, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water to cool.

When ready to serve, bring broth to simmer and add broccoli. Simmer for 3 minutes and turn off heat. Divide noodles among 6-8 large soup bowls. Divide oxtail, tendon and short rib meat among the bowls, scattering around the noodles. Divide the raw eye of round among the bowls, laying beef overlapping on top of noodles. Ladle hot broth and broccoli over raw beef, filling bowls (this will cook the raw beef). Serve with garnishes and sauces for dipping.

Notes: Thai fish sauce is loaded with salt. Use less if on a salt-sensitive diet. ... You can purchase thinly sliced eye of round and tendon at Uwajimaya or Fubonn Markets, or from most Asian markets. If you don't have access to one of these, buy a tender cut of beef and slice as thin as you can. ... Beef tendon, though it seems fatty, is almost pure protein, and my wife, Leslee, loves it!

Recipe by Ken Gordon, Kenny & Zuke's Delicatessen

