

Gordon Ramsay's Hungarian Goulash Recipe: The Slow-Cooked Comfort You Need

Gordon Ramsay's Hungarian Goulash: The Soul-Warming Classic



TIME
20 min

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INGREDIENTS

Swaps and Notes:

Beef Cut: If you can't find chuck, beef shoulder or oxtail can also work, though cooking times may vary. You want a cut with good marbling and connective tissue.

Spiciness: If you want a little heat, swap out 1 teaspoon of the sweet paprika for hot Hungarian paprika.

Caraway Seeds: These are traditional but polarizing. If you aren't a fan, you can omit them without sacrificing the core integrity of the dish.

Vegetables: Feel free to add diced carrots or potatoes (about 1 cup each) during the last hour of cooking for a heartier meal.

The Steps: How to Make the Goulash:

1. Sear the Beef:

In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat.

Working in batches, add the beef cubes and sear them on all sides until nicely browned. Do not crowd the pot—you want a sear, not a steam. Remove the browned beef and set it aside.

2. Build the Flavor Base:

In the same pot (using the rendered beef fat and oil), add the finely sliced onions. Sauté until they are softened and golden brown, about 8-10 minutes. Scrape up any browned bits (fond) from the bottom of the pot.

Add the minced garlic and cook for another minute until fragrant.

Stir in the sweet paprika, smoked paprika, and caraway seeds along with the tomato paste. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes. This step, known as blooming the spices, releases their maximum flavor and color.

3. Thicken and Simmer:

Return the seared beef to the pot. Sprinkle the flour over the beef and spice mixture, stirring well to coat everything evenly.

Add the sliced red bell pepper and pour in the beef stock. Season generously with salt and pepper to taste.

Bring the mixture to a strong simmer.

4. The Slow Cook:

Reduce the heat to the lowest setting (or place the covered Dutch oven in a 325°F oven).

Cover the pot tightly and cook for 2 to 2.5 hours, or until the beef is absolutely fork-tender. The sauce should be rich, thick, and have a deep, vibrant color. Taste and adjust seasoning one last time.

5. Serve:

Serve the Goulash hot. Finish each serving with a dollop of cool, tangy sour cream and a sprinkle of fresh chopped parsley.

Tips for Success:

The Quality of Paprika Matters: This is the soul of goulash. Invest in good quality, imported sweet Hungarian paprika. The difference in flavor and color is night and day compared to generic grocery store varieties.

Don't Rush the Searing: Searing the beef is non-negotiable. The browned crust adds a crucial layer of deep, savory flavor (the Maillard reaction) that will carry through the entire stew.

Low and Slow: The 2.5-hour cook time is essential. The low heat allows the connective tissues in the beef to melt into gelatin, tenderizing the meat and naturally thickening the sauce. Don't crank up the heat to speed things along-you'll end up with tough beef.

Serving Suggestions and Pairings:

Egg Noodles: Wide, buttered egg noodles are a classic, comforting pairing.

Rustic Bread: A crusty loaf of sourdough bread is perfect for dipping.

Boiled Potatoes: Simple, starchy potatoes work well underneath the rich stew.

Nutritional Information (Per Serving):

Storage and Leftover Tips:

Storage: Cool the goulash completely, then transfer it to an airtight container. It will keep in the

refrigerator for 3-4 days.

Freezing: Goulash freezes beautifully. Place it in a freezer-safe container, leaving about an inch of headspace, and freeze for up to 3 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before reheating.

Reheating: Reheat gently on the stovetop over low heat, adding a splash of stock or water if the sauce has become too thick. Avoid boiling, which can dry out the beef.

DIRECTIONS

1. Prep : Time: 20 minutes | Cooking Time: 2.5 hours | Total Time: 2 hours 50 minutes
2. Sear the Beef: In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat.
3. Working in batches, add the beef cubes and sear them on all sides until nicely browned. Do not crowd the pot-you want a sear, not a steam. Remove the browned beef and set it aside.
4. Build the Flavor Base: In the same pot (using the rendered beef fat and oil), add the finely sliced onions. SautØ until they are softened and golden brown, about 8-10 minutes. Scrape up any browned bits (fond) from the bottom of the pot.
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8. Add the sliced red bell pepper and pour in the beef stock. Season generously with salt and pepper to taste.
9. Bring the mixture to a strong simmer.
10. The Slow Cook: Reduce the heat to the lowest setting (or place the covered Dutch oven in a 325°F oven).
11. Cover the pot tightly and cook for 2 to 2.5 hours, or until the beef is absolutely fork-tender. The sauce

should be rich, thick, and have a deep, vibrant color. Taste and adjust seasoning one last time.

12. **Serve:** Serve the Goulash hot. Finish each serving with a dollop of cool, tangy sour cream and a sprinkle of fresh chopped parsley.
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14. **Don't : Rush the Searing:** Searing the beef is non-negotiable. The browned crust adds a crucial layer of deep, savory flavor (the Maillard reaction) that will carry through the entire stew.
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16. **Serving Suggestions and Pairings:** Goulash is traditionally served with something simple to soak up the phenomenal sauce. My favorite pairings include:
17. **Egg : Noodles:** Wide, buttered egg noodles are a classic, comforting pairing.
18. **Rustic : Bread:** A crusty loaf of sourdough bread is perfect for dipping.
19. **Boiled : Potatoes:** Simple, starchy potatoes work well underneath the rich stew.
20. **For a drink pairing, a robust : Hungarian dry red wine,** such as a KØkfrankos or a spicy Egri BikavØr (Bull's Blood), stands up perfectly to the rich beef and paprika flavors. If you prefer beer, a dark lager or a smooth, malty German Dunkel is an excellent choice.
21. **Nutritional Information (Per Serving):** Export to Sheets
22. **Note:** Nutritional values are approximate and may vary based on specific ingredients and brands used.
23. **Storage and Leftover Tips:** Goulash is one of those miraculous dishes that tastes even better the next day. The flavors truly marry overnight.
24. **Storage:** Cool the goulash completely, then transfer it to an airtight container. It will keep in the refrigerator for 3-4 days.
25. **Freezing:** Goulash freezes beautifully. Place it in a freezer-safe container, leaving about an inch of headspace, and freeze for up to 3 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before reheating.

SWAPS & NOTES

Beef Chuck or Stewing Beef 2 lbs Cut into roughly 1-inch cubes.

Olive Oil 2 tablespoons For searing the beef and sautØing the aromatics.

Sweet Hungarian Paprika 2 tablespoons Crucial for authentic color and flavor.

Smoked Paprika 1 teaspoon Adds a necessary layer of smokiness.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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