



Pomegranate Brisket

By: Rivka Friedman

Notes:

- In making this recipe, I used KOL Foods kosher, grass-fed brisket, which was slightly leaner than both standard (corn-fed) brisket and standard kosher brisket. If using a fattier cut of brisket, be sure to trim off the excess fat, as braising will render that fat, and your braising liquid will become too greasy.
- This recipe can be made with any cut of meat—the braising lends itself to tougher cuts of meat.
- Don't use beef stock unless it's homemade or very high quality. Brisket, like other tougher cuts, is incredibly flavorful, and bad beef stock will mask that flavor. KOL Foods offers excellent and hardy soup bones.
- Once brisket is in the oven, check it occasionally to ensure that the liquid is not boiling. Liquid that is too hot will tighten the muscle fibers in the meat instead of helping to break them down.

5 pounds of first-cut brisket, trimmed of any excess fat
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 leeks, cleaned and chopped
2 yellow onions, coarsely chopped
2 carrots, quartered lengthwise and chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
5 cloves garlic, smashed, skins removed
2 bay leaves
2 tablespoons tomato paste
3-4 sprigs parsley, roughly chopped
2 sprigs thyme
3 tablespoons pomegranate syrup
1 cup pomegranate juice
1 bottle dry red wine minus 1 cup (to drink, of course)
½ cup beef stock, optional

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 325°.
2. Pat brisket dry and salt liberally on both sides. If using kosher meat, do not salt – meat has already been amply salted.
3. Put your largest, deepest sauté pan (preferably oven-safe) over medium-high heat. Using sturdy kitchen tongs, transfer brisket to pan and sear, undisturbed, for 4-5 minutes, until underside develops browned crust. Turn brisket and cook 3-4 minutes more on second side, until similarly seared. If pan is oven-safe, transfer brisket to a plate. If pan is not oven-safe, transfer brisket to 9x13 oven-safe pan and set aside.
4. Pour off any fat that has accumulated in pan, but reserve fond (brown bits where all of the flavor resides). Reduce heat to medium, add olive oil to pan, and swirl to coat. Add onions, leeks, carrots, and celery, and sauté until onions are translucent, about 4-5 minutes, stirring regularly. Add garlic and sauté about 3 minutes more. Add bay leaves and herbs.
5. Add tomato paste, and use a wooden spoon to break it up and incorporate it into the vegetables. Sauté 3 minutes more then transfer to plate or pan holding brisket.
6. Raise the heat to medium-high. Add a splash of wine to pan, and use a wooden spoon to scrape up the fond from the bottom of the pan. Add the rest of wine, pomegranate juice, and beef stock, if using, and cook on medium-high heat until reduced by half. Add pomegranate syrup and cook 1 minute more.
7. Transfer brisket, vegetables, and braising liquid (if necessary) to oven-safe pan. Braise covered at 325 for 3 hours, or until soft and tender. At the 1-hour mark, taste sauce and correct for salt and seasoning. Remove pan from oven and allow brisket to rest at room temperature approximately 20-30 minutes. Slice against the grain.

Rivka Friedman is a native Washingtonian, back in her home town after stints in Manhattan and Jerusalem. She spends the lion's share of her free time cooking up a storm and making pottery in which to serve said cooking. With whatever time remains, Rivka maintains a food blog, NotDerbyPie, where she catalogs her cooking adventures and posts photos that'll make you hungry.