

Vietnamese beef soup with noodles (Pho Bo)

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Probably the most famous of Vietnamese dishes, pho is said to have medicinal qualities due to the wholesome nature of the beef broth, as well as herbs and spices used to make the soup.

The cooking time is well worth it, as the flavours develop with time. [Beef](#) fillet or rump steaks are best for serving. You can use fresh or dried flat rice noodles if you find the latter more convenient.

Ingredients (serves 2)

For the Aromatics Spice Pouch:

- ¼ tbsp coriander seeds
- ¼ tbsp Sichuan peppercorns
- ¼ tbsp cumin seeds
- ¼ tbsp fennel seeds
- 3 cardamom seeds
- 4 whole cloves
- 3 whole star anise
- 1 (10cm long piece) cassia bark
- ½ tbsp whole black peppercorns

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For the Pho Stock

- 2½ litres beef stock
- 1/8 cup fish sauce
- 30g fresh ginger knob
- 2 tbsps unrefined sugar (rice syrup/ honey)

To Serve

- 1 cup fresh flat rice noodles
- 150g beef steaks, sliced paper thin
- 1 cup blanched mung bean sprouts
- 8 sprigs Thai basil
- 4 sprigs mint or Vietnamese mint
- 2 lemon wedges

Method

Dry-roast all Aromatics Spice Pouch ingredients in a small pan over medium heat until fragrant. Cool, then grind using a mortar and pestle. Add the ground spices to a muslin square and tie up tightly in a knot. Set aside.

Place stock, fish sauce, ginger, sugar and spice pouch in a large pot. Bring to a boil then reduce to a simmer and cook for 30 to 45 minutes for the flavours to develop.

When ready, divide rice noodles between bowls (these will cook in the stock). Top with beef slices and pour over boiling hot stock. Top the soup with sprouts. Serve fresh herbs and and lemon on the side.

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Recipe and images from Martyna Angells.