



Cooking on Deadline

## Taco night just got better

By Katie Workman

**B**arbecoa beef or lamb or goat, is by definition slowly cooked meat. The word is Mexican, and originally referred to a cooking method by which parts of an animal were wrapped in leaves, and steamed and smoked simultaneously over fire.

The dish came to America from Mexico by way of Texas, and is very much a part of Mexican immigrant and Tex Mex culture, as well as the cuisine of Mexico. So the notion of making it in a slow cooker is simultaneously radical and obvious. And the resulting meat is flavorful and tender, begging to be stuffed in a soft taco with toppings.

Leftovers might be used in chili, stews, enchiladas, burritos or quesadillas; a couple of cups of shredded, cooked beef in the fridge are a springboard for any number of dinners later in the week. This type of one-two-punch cooking is very rewarding. So throw that big chunk of beef into the slow cooker with a nice battalion of seasonings, shred up the soft meat, heat some tortillas in the microwave, oven or a skillet, and have yourself a delicious little winter taco feast.

## SLOW COOKER BARBACOA BEEF TACOS

Serves 8

Start to finish: 10 hours, 20 minutes (10 hours of which are hands off)

Ingredients

12 -1/2 pound eye of round beef  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 tablespoon chipotle in adobo puree  
1 onion, chopped  
1 tablespoon minced garlic  
2 teaspoons chili powder  
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves  
1 tablespoon kosher salt  
Juice of 2 limes  
1/4 cup cider vinegar  
3 cups beef or chicken broth  
3 bay leaves  
Warmed corn or flour tortillas to serve

### Optional toppings

Salsa (tomato or tomatillo)  
Sour cream  
Shredded cheddar, or crumbled queso fresco, goat cheese, or feta  
Diced avocado  
Slivered red onion

### Preparations

In a large, heavy skillet over high heat, heat the oil. Sear the beef on all sides until browned. Meanwhile, combine the chipotle puree, onion, garlic, chili powder, cloves, salt, lime juice and vinegar in a slow cooker. Add the broth and the bay leaves.

Cook on low for 10 hours, until the meat is falling-apart tender. Remove the meat from the slow cooker and let it sit for about 20 to 30 minutes, then pull it apart using two forks. Meanwhile, pour the cooking liquid into a tall container and put it in the fridge. When you have pulled apart the meat, take out the liquid and skim off any fat that has risen to the top. Rewarm the sauce if needed and drizzle the shredded meat with some of the cooking liquid until nicely moistened but not dripping.

Serve with warmed tortillas and whatever toppings you like. — AP