

Traditional Crispy Cuban

Vaca Frita

⌚ Prep: 20m 🔥 Cook: 50m Σ Total: 70m 🍽️ 5 servings



Video ref: Cocina Cubana con Luz

MISE EN PLACE / INGREDIENTS

[10]

- ☐ 2 lbs Beef Flank Steak
- ☐ 0.5 cup Bitter orange marinade (Badia Sour Orange)
- ☐ 8 cloves Minced garlic cloves
- ☐ 2 large Sliced white onions
- ☐ 1 tsp Ground cumin
- ☐ 3 tbsp Extra virgin olive oil
- ☐ 6 cups Water (for pressure cooking flank steak)
- ☐ 2 leaves Dried bay leaves
- ☐ 2 tsp, divided Kosher salt, divided
- ☐ 1 tsp Freshly ground black pepper

🛒 US SUPERMARKET BRAND GUIDE

Sour Orange: Badia Naranja Agria Bitter Orange
Authentic Caribbean citrus acidity. • 📍 Hispanic section.

COOKING SEQUENCE & CHECKPOINTS

1 Cook and Shred

⌚ 45 min

Pressure cook flank steak 40 minutes until tender. Hand shred into thin ribbons.

✓ Checkpoint: Pliable long shreds.

2 Mojo Marinade

⌚ 15 min

Toss beef with garlic, sour orange, cumin, and salt 15 minutes.

✓ Checkpoint: Fragrant garlic-citrus aroma.

3 Cast Iron Crisp

⌚ 6 min

Sear in smoking cast iron 3 minutes per side undisturbed.

✓ Checkpoint: Deep mahogany crisp edges.

4 Sauté Onions

⌚ 3 min

Add onion rings and sauté 3 minutes until translucent.

✓ Checkpoint: Sweet onions and crunchy beef.

🛡️ FOOD SAFETY & INTERNAL TEMPERATURE: SAFETY ≥145°F (63°C) | TEXTURE TARGET: 202°F–205°F (95°C) COLLAGEN BREAKDOWN & 375°F CAST-IRON SEAR

USDA Beef Safety Minimum: ≥145°F (63°C) internal temperature with a 3-minute rest (exceeded during pressure braising and high-heat pan searing).

👁️ MASTER DONENESS CHECKPOINT:

Edges of beef shreds must be deeply browned and crunchy like chicharrón.

🔪 WHY IT WORKS:

Smoking Cast Iron: High heat flash-crisps shredded beef surfaces before moisture escapes.

⚠️ TROUBLESHOOTING:

Beef is soft not crispy: Fry in small batches over smoking oil.