

HENSONS

Famous Salt Beef

Cooking

Hensons Famous Salt Beef is supplied vacuum packed. You will notice that there is a small amount of liquid in the bag. This is perfectly normal, and is simply the brine that the salt beef has been curing in. The brisket has been trimmed of excess fat, but a small amount remains and this should be left on the meat whilst cooking as it enhances the flavour and helps to keep the meat moist. It can be trimmed off, if desired, prior to serving.

Place the raw meat in the largest pan or cauldron available, cover with cold water and bring gently to the boil. Skim the surface of the water and cook very gently for around three and a half hours on a rolling simmer, or until the meat is tender. Top up with water during cooking, if necessary. The key here is not to try to speed up cooking by boiling too fast. To test whether the meat is ready to serve, place a knife into the meat. It should slide in very easily.



Once cooked the salt beef will stay warm and moist in a bain marie for several hours. It can also be cooked in advance, refrigerated and then reheated in the original cooking water later the same day or the next day. In this case the water should be refrigerated until it is needed. If you prefer, you can use stock (vegetable or chicken works best) to reheat the product.

So, which herbs and spices to use? Well here's your chance to add your own cachet to the product. We've tried asking the top salt beef chefs for their secrets, but to no avail. So here are our own suggestions, to give you an idea.

Remember that you don't need to add anything at all, but you might choose from some peppercorns, a couple of bay leaves, garlic, carrots, nutmeg, ginger or mustard. Vegetables can be added to the stock, but should be discarded after cooking. Try carrots, onions, or a potato or two. And here's one little secret – if you want to give the meat some added colour try adding a couple of fresh beetroot to the stock.

Serving Suggestions

The classic way to serve salt beef is piled high in a bagel or a crusty bread sandwich. If you can get it, rye bread is perfect for salt beef, and a rye and caraway seed loaf works especially well. (Don't use a dark rye bread as this is too rich and heavy). Serve with a sliced gherkin some English mustard. Simplicity in itself. No butter is needed, the meat is very moist and succulent.

For a lighter alternative serve in a toasted panini together with rocket and guacamole, or sliced thinly and served cold in wraps with red and yellow peppers.

For main courses, serve three or four thickly cut slices of salt beef with a creamy mustard mash, English mustard, some cornichons and sauerkraut.

Leeks or beetroot in white sauce make excellent accompaniments.

Salt beef makes an excellent hash and is a great item to have on an all-day breakfast menu. Made very simply using cooked salt beef, potatoes, onions herbs, spices and Worcester sauce, serve with a poached or fried egg on top.

Salt beef terrine is a popular starter in restaurants, served with piccalilli.



When mentioning salt beef on your menu it is worth remembering that the Americans and the Irish all love salt beef, but they call it corned beef.