

Courtesy of El Tesoro

MAINS El Tesoro

Beef barbacoa from El Tesoro

By Sarra Sedghi · Rough Draft Atlanta, 10/13/2026

Serves 10 to 12 | **Prep** about 20 minutes | **Cook** about 2 hours | **Total** about 6 hours 20 minutes

Servings and times are Rough Draft estimates.

Ingredients

- [ ] 10 dry Mexican guajillo chile peppers
- [ ] 3 arbol chile peppers
- [ ] 3 garlic cloves
- [ ] 2 whole cloves
- [ ] 1/2 Tbsp whole black pepper
- [ ] 1/2 Tbsp thyme
- [ ] 1 tsp cumin
- [ ] 1/4 cup salt
- [ ] 4 cups water
- [ ] 3 avocado leaves
- [ ] 3 bay leaves
- [ ] 5 pounds stew beef cubes

Directions

1. Toast chiles in a heavy skillet until aromatic.
2. Combine all ingredients, except the bay and avocado leaves, in a blender. Add 2 cups water and blend until smooth, adding water as needed to get a smooth, thick sauce.
3. Mix in the beef, then marinate in the sauce for at least four hours, or overnight.
4. Place marinated beef, all sauce, and leaves in a heavy pot over medium-high heat. Bring to a simmer and cook for 2 hours, or until beef cubes can be easily split with a fork.
5. Transfer to a serving platter and partially break down cubes to use in tacos, mulitas, or burritos.

The story

This week, we're sharing a beef barbacoa recipe from El Tesoro.

Chef de cuisine Mayra Vazquez taught herself how to make this recipe out of necessity as a child when she had to care for her siblings and other family members.

Vazquez recommends sourcing the chiles, avocado leaves, and meat for this recipe at a farmers market near a Latino community. "Finding the avocado leaves is the hardest [ingredient to source], but they should definitely be found at a farmers market near a Latino community," she said.

It's important to ensure you're using Mexican guajillo peppers. Vazquez said that other types of chile guajillo yield a different taste. You can also prepare this recipe in an oven, slow cooker, or even a steamer.

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