

Bare Bones

Of all the pleasures celebrated in Mei Chin's ode to bones (see "Beautiful Bones," page 28), the luscious stuff inside a beef marrow bone may be the most irresistible. That was what Bruce and Eric Bromberg decided when they put the dish pictured below on the menu of their Blue Ribbon restaurants in New York City, back in the early 1990s. During their culinary training in Paris, the brothers had acquired a habit from their coworkers of snatching bones left over from making stock and eating the delicious marrow inside; they figured it was time to bring this cook's treat out of the kitchen. "No other restaurant was serving bones this way," Eric Bromberg recalls—the closest you might get would be the veal shank in osso buco or the bones in a meaty French *pot-au-feu*. The Brombergs were determined to feature bones front and center, so they chose beef femur bones—the section extending from hip to knee—which are large in diameter and contain copious marrow. "Ask your butcher for two-inch bones, center cut," Eric says. "If they're cut from the end, the marrow will be less plentiful." They soaked the bones in salt water in the refrigerator to draw out any discoloration, and then poached them on the stove top so they could keep an eye on them and plate them when the marrow had softened to just the right custardy texture. "This food is not haute," Eric says. "But we wanted to present bones in all their glory." Two decades later, their customers won't let them take the dish off the menu. —*Hilary Merzbacher*



Beef Marrow Bones with Fried Parsley

SERVES 6-8

We love this now-classic dish served at the Blue Ribbon restaurants in New York City, in which the marrow is spread over grilled toast and topped with fried parsley.

- 3 lb. center-cut beef marrow bones, cut into 2" lengths
- 1 cup kosher salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ "-thick slices challah bread
- Fleur de sel, to garnish

1 Place bones and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup kosher salt in a bowl and cover with cold water; chill and let soak to remove any blood, 1–2 days. Change the water three times during this period, adding another $\frac{1}{4}$ cup kosher salt each time. Drain bones.

2 Place bones in a 6-qt. saucepan and pour enough water to come 1" above bones. Place over medium-low heat, and bring to a gentle simmer; cook until marrow is hot in the center, about 25 minutes. Using tongs, transfer bones to a plate.

3 Meanwhile, heat $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oil in an 8" skillet over medium-high heat; add parsley, and cook until crisp, about 15 seconds. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to paper towels to drain; set aside and discard cooking oil. Heat a cast-iron grill pan over high heat, and brush challah bread with remaining oil; grill bread, turning once, until lightly charred with grill marks and toasted, about 2 minutes.

4 To serve, place warm marrow bones on a platter and sprinkle with fried parsley and fleur de sel; serve with challah toast on the side.

From Our Kitchen to Yours

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