

## Spicy Jalapeño Beef Tips

- This is about the simplest, most typical-tasting everyday dish in Mexican eateries from Tijuana to Tulum—chunks of beef seared quickly in a hot skillet, with tomatoes, jalapeño chilies, onions and garlic. Weave in a little red wine or Worcestershire, as I have suggested here, perhaps a little cilantro or *epazote*, and you have a most memorable meal that didn't take all afternoon to make. When making this for a summertime gathering, I like to serve these beef tips with charcoal-grilled corn and a big salad of lettuce from the garden.
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- Serves 4
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- 2 tablespoons bacon drippings, rich-tasting pork lard or olive oil
- About 1 ¼ pounds tender boneless beef (for a quick dinner, I'd choose sirloin; for a more special occasion, it'd be strip steak, ribeye or tenderloin), cut into 1-inch cubes and patted dry on paper towels
- A liberal sprinkling of salt for the meat, plus a little for the sauce if necessary
- large white onion, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup red wine OR 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes, drained
- cups Roasted Jalapeño- Tomato Salsa
- ½ to ¾ cup sliced pickled jalapeños, well drained (optional)
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus a few sprigs for garnish
- OR a couple of tablespoons chopped fresh *epazote*, plus a few leaves or sprigs for garnish
- In a large, heavy skillet, heat the bacon drippings, lard or oil over medium-high. Sprinkle the meat liberally with salt. When the fat is quite hot, lay in the meat cubes in an uncrowded layer and quick-fry, stirring and turning them all regularly, until nicely browned, about 4 to 5 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon to a plate. (If you cut into a cube of meat, it should still be no more cooked than about medium-rare.)
- With the skillet still on the heat, add the onion and cook, stirring, for 3 or 4 minutes until golden, then add the wine or Worcestershire and stir as it quickly evaporates. Next, add the tomatoes, stir regularly for 2 to 3 minutes as they darken and any liquid they lose evaporates (this will sweeten them considerably). And, lastly, add the salsa, optional pickled jalapeños and whichever herb you've chosen. Bring to a simmer, and then reduce the heat to medium. Taste the sauce and season with salt if necessary.
- Add the meat back to the pan along with any juice that has accumulated on the plate, let heat through (or simmer for a couple of minutes if you like your meat more done), then spoon into a warm platter and garnish with herb sprigs.