Main dishes / France

# Steak Tartare

Hand-cut beef fillet mixed tableside with egg yolk, Dijon, capers, shallot, and Worcestershire — a classic that demands quality beef, confident seasoning, and no cooking at all.

**Time** 30 min **Servings** 4

## What you'll need.

- ☐ 100 parts Beef fillet (center-cut, fully trimmed of sinew and silver skin)
- ☐ 4 parts Egg yolk (very fresh, preferably pasteurized)
- ☐ 4 parts Dijon mustard
- ☐ 6 parts Shallot, very finely brunoise
- ☐ 5 parts Non-pareil capers, drained and roughly chopped
- ☐ 2 parts Worcestershire sauce
- ☐ 1 parts Fine sea salt
- ☐ 0.5 parts Freshly ground black pepper
- ☐ 2 parts Cognac or brandy (optional)
- ☐ 3 parts Flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- ☐ 5 parts Cornichons, sliced, to serve

## Let's make it.

**01** Keep the beef in the freezer for 15–20 minutes before cutting — a partially firm fillet is dramatically easier to cut cleanly. This is not to freeze it but to firm the fibers so the knife glides rather than drags. The beef must remain red, not grey; it should be cold to the touch at the core but not frozen solid. All bowls, the cutting board, and the knife should be chilled as well if working in a warm kitchen.

**02** Using a sharp, heavy chef's knife, first slice the beef across the grain into 4 mm planks. Stack the planks and cut into 4 mm batons. Rotate and cut into 4 mm dice. Gather the dice and run the knife through them once or twice to break up any larger pieces — you want 3–4 mm irregular cubes, not a paste. Do not use a food processor; it purees rather than cuts, yielding a rubbery, homogeneous texture. The goal is pieces small enough to meld with the dressing but large enough to retain the clean, iron-rich flavor of the beef.

**03** In a cold bowl, combine the Dijon, Worcestershire, cognac (if using), and egg yolk, whisking briefly to blend. Add the shallot, capers, and parsley. Fold in the hand-cut beef using a fork — do not use your hands, which will warm the meat. Season aggressively with salt and pepper, tasting as you go. Raw beef needs noticeably more salt than you expect; under-seasoned tartare tastes flat and bloody. The mustard and capers carry acidity; the Worcestershire and egg yolk provide binding and depth. Taste. Adjust. Taste again. The mix should taste bright, savory, and boldly seasoned — not timid.

04 Press the tartare into a ring mold set on a chilled plate, or form a neat mound by hand using two spoons. If presenting formally, create a shallow well on top and nestle an extra egg yolk in the shell. Arrange cornichons, extra capers, and toasted bread around the plate. Serve within 5 minutes of plating — the acid and salt will continue to break down the beef. Raw beef served cold on a cold plate.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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