

# Jamaican Pepper Steak

SERVES 4 TIME 1¼ hours, plus 1 hour marinating

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## WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

There's no clearer snapshot of Jamaican Chinese cooking than pepper steak: the beef-and-bell pepper stir-fry lavished with heady seasonings and brown gravy. Briefly soaking the meat in a baking soda solution raised its pH, which helped it h...

## GATHER YOUR INGREDIENTS

1 (1¼-pound) boneless strip steak, trimmed	½ teaspoon onion powder
1 tablespoon water	2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons vegetable oil, divided
¼ teaspoon baking soda	2 tablespoons dark rum or brandy
4 teaspoons cornstarch, divided	½ large red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into ¼-inch-wide strips
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce	½ large yellow bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into ¼-inch-wide strips
1 teaspoon pepper, divided	½ large green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into ¼-inch-wide strips
½ teaspoon table salt	3 scallions, cut into 2-inch pieces
2 cups beef broth	5 garlic cloves, sliced
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce	1 teaspoon whole allspice berries, coarsely ground
2 tablespoons oyster sauce	½ teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1 teaspoon packed brown sugar	½ teaspoon minced fresh thyme
½ teaspoon garlic powder	½ teaspoon minced Scotch bonnet chile



Prepare the vegetables and aromatics while the beef rests. Dark soy sauce is thicker and a bit sweeter than the all-purpose kind; shop for it online or at an Asian market. You can substitute a habanero chile for the Scotch bonnet. We prefer coarsely ground allspice berries (use a spice grinder or mortar and pestle), but ½ teaspoon ground allspice can be used. Serve over rice or rice and peas. If you prefer, you can use a [carbon-steel skillet](#) instead of a nonstick skillet.

## INSTRUCTIONS

Slice beef crosswise ¼ inch thick. Cut slices into ¼-inch-thick strips. Combine water and baking soda in medium bowl. Add beef and toss to coat. Let sit at room temperature for 5 minutes.

Add 1 teaspoon cornstarch, soy sauce, ½ teaspoon pepper, and salt to beef and toss until well combined. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 2 hours.

Whisk beef broth, Worcestershire sauce, oyster sauce, sugar, garlic powder, onion powder, remaining 1 tablespoon cornstarch, and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper in bowl.

Heat 2 teaspoons oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Add half of beef in single layer. Cook without stirring for 1 minute. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until spotty brown on both sides, about 1 minute longer. Transfer to clean bowl. Repeat with 2 teaspoons oil and remaining beef. Remove now-empty skillet from heat. Add rum and, using spatula, scrape any browned bits from skillet. Transfer any remaining liquid and browned bits to bowl with beef.

Return skillet to medium-high heat, add 2 teaspoons oil, and heat until just smoking. Add bell peppers and cook, stirring occasionally, until peppers are spotty brown but still crisp, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer peppers to bowl with beef.

Return skillet to medium-high heat, add remaining 2 teaspoons oil, and heat until just smoking. Add scallions and cook, stirring occasionally, until spotty brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Add garlic, allspice, ginger, thyme, and Scotch bonnet. Cook, stirring frequently, until garlic is lightly browned and fragrant, about 1 minute. Transfer scallion mixture to bowl with beef and peppers.

Whisk beef broth mixture to recombine. Add mixture to skillet; reduce heat to medium; and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened (spatula will start to leave trail that quickly fills in), 4 to 6 minutes. Stir in beef and vegetables and cook until heated through, about 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve.