

Beer-Braised Beef and Onions

By Melissa Clark

YIELD 8 to 12 servings

TIME 3 1/2 hours, plus marinating

This hearty, warming beef and onion stew is flavored with Belgian beer, bay leaves and sweet paprika. A variation on a traditional Flemish carbonnade, it's rich and homey but still lively, with a ruddy color from the paprika. The very large quantity of onions adds sweetness, and also helps make the sauce velvety soft. Serve it over potatoes, noodles or polenta.

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon kosher salt, more as needed

1 teaspoon black pepper, more for garnish

6 bay leaves

2 teaspoons sweet paprika, more for garnish

4 pounds boneless beef stew meat, cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, more as needed

4 Spanish or very large yellow onions, thinly sliced

6 sprigs fresh thyme

4 sprigs fresh parsley, plus chopped parsley, for garnish

1 tablespoon tomato paste

1 teaspoon ground coriander

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

2 cups beef or chicken stock, preferably homemade

1 cup beer, preferably Belgian-style or brown ale

Flaky sea salt, for garnish

PREPARATION

Step 1

In a large bowl, combine salt, pepper, bay leaves and paprika. Toss meat to coat, then cover, refrigerate and marinate at least 2 hours or overnight.

Step 2

Heat oven to 325 degrees. In a large (8-quart) Dutch oven or other heavy pot, heat butter and oil over medium-high until shimmering. Working in batches, brown beef on two sides until dark and crusty, transferring to a bowl when browned (reserve bay leaves). As you cook, add more oil and adjust heat if necessary to prevent burning.

Step 3

When all the meat is browned, add onions to the empty pot and return the heat to medium-high if you lowered it. Cook, stirring and scraping up the brown coating on the bottom of the pan as the onions release their liquid.

Step 4

Continue cooking until onions are deeply golden brown and soft, 20 to 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Step 5

Meanwhile, make a bouquet garni by tying thyme, parsley and reserved bay leaves together with kitchen string (or just throw them in the pot and warn your guests not to eat them).

Step 6

Push the onions to the sides, then add tomato paste, coriander and cinnamon to the bottom of the pan. Cook, stirring, 1 minute, until

Dijon-style mustard, preferably extra-hot, for serving

paste is darkened and fragrant. Stir in flour, cook another minute, then add stock, beer, 1 cup water and bouquet garni. Return beef and any juices in the bowl to the pot, bring to a simmer, then cover and transfer to oven. Cook until beef is tender, about 2 1/2 to 3 hours, turning it over halfway through.

Step 7

If the sauce seems thin, remove the meat with a slotted spoon; cover with foil to keep warm. Return pot with liquid to stove and simmer until thickened to taste, 5 to 10 minutes. Return the meat to pot and stir to heat through. Serve from the pot or a platter. Garnish with chopped parsley, flaky sea salt, pepper and paprika. Serve with mustard on the side.

Tip

To make this in an electric pressure cooker, reduce stock to 1 cup and cook at high pressure for 35 minutes. If using a slow cooker, cook on low for 5 to 7 hours.

PRIVATE NOTES

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