

## BEEF STEW

Serves 6 to 8

Use a good quality medium bodied wine, such as Cores du Rhone or Pinot Noir, for this stew. Try to find beef that is well marbled with white veins of fat. Meat that is too lean will come out slightly dry. Four pounds of blade steaks, trimmed of gristle and silver skin, can be substituted for the chuck eye roast. While the blade steak will yield slightly thinner pieces after trimming, it should still be cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces. Look for salt pork that looks meaty and is roughly 75 percent lean.

2 medium garlic cloves, minced or pressed through a garlic press (about 2 teaspoons)  
4 anchovy fillets, minced fine (about 2 teaspoons)  
1 tablespoon tomato paste  
1 (4 pound) boneless chuck eye roast, trimmed of excess fat and cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces  
2 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1 large onion, halved and sliced 1/8 inch thick  
4 carrots, peeled and cut into 1 inch piece  
1/4 cup unbleached all purpose flour  
2 cups red wine (see note)  
2 cups low sodium chicken broth  
4 ounces salt pork (see note), rinsed of excess salt  
2 bay leaves  
4 sprigs fresh thyme  
1 pound Yukon Gold potatoes, scrubbed and cut into 1 inch piece  
1 1/2 cups frozen pearl onion, thawed  
2 teaspoons (about 1 packet) unflavored powdered gelatin  
1/2 cup water  
1 cup frozen peas, thawed  
Table salt and ground black pepper

1. Adjust an oven rack to the lower middle position and heat the oven to 300 degrees. Combine the garlic and anchovies in a small bowl and press the mixture with the back of a fork to form a paste. Stir in the tomato paste and set the mixture aside.

2. Pat the meat dry with paper towels (do not season the meat). Heat 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil in a large Dutch oven over high heat until just starting to smoke. Add half of the beef and cook until well browned on all sides, about 8 minutes total, reducing the heat if the oil begins to smoke or the fond begins to burn. Transfer the beef to a large plate. Repeat with the remaining 1 tablespoon vegetable oil and remaining beef, leaving the second batch of meat in the pot after browning.

3. Reduce the heat to medium and return the first batch of beef to the pot. Add the onion and carrots to the pot and stir to combine with the beef. Cook, scraping the bottom of the pan to loosen any browned bits, until the onion is softened, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the garlic mixture and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the flour and cook, stirring constantly, until no dry flour remains, about 30 seconds.

4. Slowly add the wine, scraping the bottom of the pan to loosen any browned bits. Increase the heat to high and allow the wine to simmer until thickened and slightly reduced, about 2 minutes. Stir in the broth, salt pork, bay leaves, and thyme. Bring to a simmer, cover, transfer to the oven, and cook for 1 1/2 hours.

5. Remove the pot from the oven. Remove and discard the bay leaves and salt pork. Stir in the potatoes, cover, return the pot to the oven, and cook until the potatoes are almost tender, about 45 minutes.

6. Using a large spoon, skim any excess fat from the surface of the stew. Stir in the pearl onions. Cook over medium heat until the potatoes and onions are cooked through and the meat offers little resistance when poked with a fork (the meat should not be falling apart), about 15 minutes. Meanwhile sprinkle the gelatin over the water in a small bowl and allow to soften for 5 minutes.

7. Increase the heat to high and stir in the softened gelatin mixture and the peas. Simmer until the gelatin is fully dissolved and the stew is thickened, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve. (The stew can be cooled, covered tightly, and refrigerated for up to 2 days. Reheat it gently before serving).