

American Beef Stew



Servings: 8

Notes:

- The name of the game for stews is flavor development. The entire goal of this recipe is to build layers of flavors via multiple roasting, sauteing, frying, and braising steps.
- The cooking liquid is a mixture of highly savory ingredients. While it may seem like the mixture will be fishy due to the anchovy and fish sauce, the dish's depth of flavor completely blends these ingredients' scent and primary fishy flavors. I personally cannot taste the fish at all when making this, but if you're especially sensitive or adverse to fishy scents or flavors, you can skip adding them entirely!
- Aim to get all of the vegetables to be roughly the same size. Since we're not cutting the pearl onions, aim to use those as a reference for how large your other vegetable pieces should be.

- You can substitute the pearl onions for an equal amount of white or yellow onion, chopped into roughly 1 inch chunks.
 - The carrots and potatoes can be subbed with parsnips and other variety of potatoes respectively; just be sure to cut them all evenly.
 - The vegetables do not have to be perfect cubes. I actually prefer a more rustic cuts to add heterogenous textures and shapes to the dish for more interesting visuals and eating experiences (this is the snobbiest shit I've ever said in my life).
 - Step 7 can be done with a whisk/immersion blender and a large bowl - the blender just makes this easier since you have to dissolve quite a lot of stuff into cold water.
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Special Equipment Needed

- 4 to 6 Quart dutch oven or other heavy bottomed, oven safe pot

Ingredients

- Salt
- Pepper
- Neutral oil (canola, corn, soy, etc.)
- 2 Pound beef chuck roast
- 1/3 Cup dry red wine (if you don't have wine or don't want to use it, you can use water or basically any relatively neutral stocks or broths)
- 1 Pound pearl onions, peeled
- 3 Large carrots (8-10 inches long, 1-1.5 inches at the thickest point), chopped into 1 inch pieces
- 1 Pound small red potatoes, halved
- 2 Tablespoons tomato paste
- 3 Cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1-2 Sprigs of thyme and/or rosemary (Optional)
- 1/2 to 1 Cup frozen peas (Optional)

Ingredients for Cooking Liquid

- 8 Cups cold water
- 1 Tablespoon unflavored gelatin
- 2 Tablespoons Better Than Bouillon Roasted Beef Base
- 2 Tablespoons Worcestershire
- 1/2 Teaspoon MSG (Optional)
- 1 Teaspoon anchovy paste (Optional)
- 1/2 Teaspoon fish sauce (Optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit.

2. Cut the beef roast into 2 inch pieces. While cutting, remove large chunks of fat - you don't need to remove all of it, but remove any excessively large pieces.
3. Place beef on a rimmed baking sheet - lightly coat the beef with a neutral oil.
4. Spread the beef evenly on the baking sheet, making sure to avoid crowding any of the pieces.
5. Roast beef in oven for 15 minutes or until deeply browned on the first side. Flip the pieces of beef and roast the new side until deeply browned. Remove beef from baking sheet and reserve for later - DO NOT DISCARD THE PAN DRIPPINGS.
6. Reduce oven temperature to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
7. Pour wine directly onto baking sheet; use a wooden spoon or rubber spatula to loosen fond from the baking sheet. Once most of the fond is sufficiently released from the pan, pour the deglazed liquid over the reserved beef pieces.
8. In a blender, add water, gelatin, beef base, Worcestershire, MSG (if using), anchovy paste (if using), and fish sauce (if using). Blend on high until the beef base and gelatin are completely incorporated into the water.
9. Heat 2 tablespoons of neutral oil in a dutch oven set over high heat. When the oil begins to shimmer, add the onions, carrots, and potatoes. Allow some color to form on the vegetables - avoid constantly moving the vegetables to promote browning.
10. Once a bit of fond has formed on the bottom of the pan (we're aiming to develop flavor by slightly browning the vegetables, not cook them totally yet), remove and reserve the vegetables.
11. Reduce dutch oven temperature to medium and add a teaspoon of oil, if the pot seems dry.
12. Fry the tomato paste and garlic until garlic is lightly browned and fragrant. Be careful not to burn the garlic and tomato paste! As soon as you see some browning, move to the next step!
13. Add a cup of the cooking liquid created in step 7 and deglaze the bottom of the dutch oven with it.
14. Once you've loosened up all the fond the dutch oven has to offer, turn the stove heat off and put the vegetables back in the pot, followed by the beef directly on top of the vegetables. If using, nestle thyme and/or rosemary between pieces of beef.

Don't stir! We want the beef resting directly on top of the vegetables.

15. Pour beef base mixture into pot until just barely reaching 3/4 to the top of the beef pieces. We want the top of the beef to be slightly exposed during the next steps.
16. Place dutch oven into oven and roast for 90 minutes, uncovered. After about 45 minutes, flip the beef and add some additional beef base mixture if it seems like the cooking liquid has reduced too much. After 90 minutes we want to have the liquid around the middle of the beef pieces, if not slightly lower.
17. Remove dutch oven from oven and taste for seasoning - add salt and pepper as needed.
18. Add frozen peas, if using, stir, and allow peas to unfreeze and warm up in the stew.
19. Serve immediately. Leftovers refrigerate and freeze very well.

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