



100% Grass Fed Beef and Natural Vegetables
Yoder, WY
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Beef Stew in Stout

Serves 4 - 6

This is a simple dish to prep ahead and eat later. Make a little extra, and you'll have an easy dinner later in the week by reheating the stew gently on the stove while you assemble a fresh salad and set out a loaf of fresh, crusty bread. No one will complain about mid-week "left-overs" with this stew.

Ingredients

1.5-2 pounds grass-fed beef stew meat,
 OR use shank (boneless weight), chuck, sirloin tip, beef cheek, or top round, trimmed and cut into stew-size cubes (~1 inch)
8 oz. pancetta or thick-cut bacon, cut into small pieces, slightly smaller than the beef
8 oz. baby onions, peeled and whole
 OR 8 oz. onions, peeled and cut into wedges
Up to 1/3 cup flour, seasoned with salt and pepper (optional)
1 pint oatmeal stout (optional: a good porter, or a well-seasoned rich beef broth)
2 bay leaves
Sprig of thyme
A few stems of parsley
Water or good beef stock
16 oz. mushrooms, sliced or small, whole - button, baby portabella, or wild
Salt and pepper to taste
Butter for sweating the mushrooms
Option: dumplings

Directions

Tie herbs into a bouquet garni, and set aside. If fresh herbs are not available, see "Herb Options", below.

Brown the pancetta or bacon until the fat runs. Transfer the meat to the pan for stewing (see Cooking Options, below). In the bacon drippings, gently fry the onions until they are lightly browned all over. Transfer onions to the casserole. In a large bag or bowl, toss the beef in the seasoned flour, and shake off the excess flour (optional). Brown the beef (whether floured or not) in the same pan in small batches, until pieces are richly dark brown on all sides. It may be necessary to add butter to the pan if it becomes too dry. Transfer browned meat to the casserole.

Pour some of the stout into the frying pan to deglaze it, scraping any residue from the pan, and tip all into the casserole. Pour in the rest of the stout. If needed, add a little water or beef stock to cover the meat. Add the herbs, and season with salt and pepper. Simmer the stew gently, until beef is completely tender (see Cooking Options, below). Add a little hot water, stock, or more stout if the meat becomes exposed and starts to dry out during cooking.

About 1 hour before stew is done, sweat the mushrooms gently in a little butter till their juices run out. Add mushrooms, together with the juices, to the stew.

Optional dumplings: this stew receives dumplings well – mix up your favorite dumpling recipe and drop dumplings onto the stew after the mushrooms are added (only recommended for stove-top or oven method).

Serve stew with mashed potatoes, egg noodles, or crusty bread, and a green salad.

Cooking Options:

Stove Top:

Bring to a boil, and then reduce heat to simmer very gently for about 3 hours, covered. This simmer should be very slow, with a bubble or two breaking the surface every minute. On some stoves, it is difficult to keep the heat low enough. Using this method, you should be home to check on the stew occasionally, to make sure it does not dry out.

Oven:

Cover casserole and transfer to the oven, pre-heated to 250 degrees. Simmer gently for about 3-4 hours. With a proper tightly-covered casserole, you should be able to leave the stew on its own until it is time to add the mushrooms.

Slow Cooker (Crock Pot):

Cover. Cook on low for 6-8 hours.

Herb Options:

- Use 2 bay leaves, 1 tsp. dried thyme, and 1 Tbsp. dried parsley, and place all herbs into a small muslin bag.
- Or, add 2 bay leaves, ½ tsp. dried thyme, and ½ Tbsp. dried parsley directly to pot. Remove bay leaves before serving.