

Beef chuck Ragu

Ingredients:

- 5 lb (1.4 kg) chuck roast patted dry and cut into fist-sized pieces
- salt
- pepper
- 2 oz olive oil
- 3 oz butter
- 4 carrots diced
- 4 celery diced
- 2 onion diced
- 3 oz garlic
- 1 can tomato paste
- ⅓ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 qt beef stock
- 2 C water
- 2 oz beef paste
- 28 oz crushed tomatoes
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 2-3 fresh thyme springs
- 2 bay leaves

Method of prep:

1. Arrange rack to center of oven and preheat oven to 350F (165C).
2. Season beef on all sides with salt and pepper.
3 lb (1.4 kg) chuck roast, 1 teaspoon table salt, 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
3. Heat oil in a large enameled Dutch oven over medium/high heat. Once oil is shimmering, add beef and sear on all sides until deep brown in color (once you place the beef in the pot, let it sit for about 2-3 minutes before touching/turning it so you get a nice sear). After searing, remove to a plate and set aside. There should be lots of browned bits on the bottom of the pot – leave those, they're great for flavor.
2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
4. Reduce heat to medium. Add butter to the pot and, once melted, add carrot, celery, and onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened (about 3-5 minutes).
1 Tablespoon butter, 2 (154 g) carrots, 2 (112 g) celery stalks, 1 (185 g) medium yellow onion
5. Add garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant (about 30 seconds).
1 ½ Tablespoons minced garlic
6. Add tomato paste and stir until well-incorporated with veggies.
3 Tablespoons tomato paste
7. Deglaze the pan by slowly pouring in red wine vinegar and scraping the bottom of the pan to loosen any brown bits. Cook until the vinegar is reduced by about 50% and the steam from the pot no longer has a pungent vinegar odor.
⅓ cup (78 ml) red wine vinegar

8. Add beef broth, water, crushed tomatoes, and crushed red pepper (if using). Bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally.
2 cups beef broth, ¼ cup (60 ml) water, 28 oz (794 g) crushed tomatoes, ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
9. Return beef to the pot and add bay leaves and thyme (make sure they are submerged), cover with lid, and transfer to the oven.
2-3 fresh thyme springs, 2 dried bay leaves
10. Cook for 3 hours or until beef is extremely tender and may be easily shredded with a fork (but don't shred it yet).
11. Remove beef from the pot. Use a potato masher to break up the vegetables in the pot (for a smoother sauce, use an immersion blender, but I like mine a bit heartier). Shred the beef and return to the pot. Taste-test and add additional salt/pepper as needed.