

Beef Bourguignonne

from Roman's collection

Utensils:

Slotted Spoon (large)

Dutch Oven (or Deep Skillet with tight fitting lid)

Small Saucepan with tight fitting lid

Measuring spoons and cups (duh!)

Lighter (one of those with the long ends for lighting fireplaces would be best, really you will use this later).

Ingredients:

3 Slices Bacon (prefer thick cut and hickory smoked if available)

1/4 cup Cooking Oil

1/3 Cup Flour

2 Medium Onions (white) - Chopped

1 Clove Garlic (or just some Garlic Powder if you would rather).

3 lbs. Boneless Beef Chuck - cut in 1 inch cubes (no the butcher does not do this for you).

2 Tsp. Salt

1/4 Tsp. pepper

1/4 Cup Cognac (do yourself a favor and get this at the liquor store, most grocery stores don't carry it and have no idea what it is! Oh, yea, you can substitute Brandy but it would kind of suck)

1 Cup Burgundy (it is in the wine section)

1 Cup Beef Broth (Just get those Bouillon cubes and dissolve on in a cup of water)

8 Small Carrots

16 (or so) whole fresh mushrooms (button)

2 Bay Leaves (Whole)

Parsley (fresh if you can find it)

Extra Wide Egg Noodles (it actually says this on the package-in the pasta aisle).

Directions:

Start by cutting the bacon strips in small pieces and throw them in the Dutch oven (which should already be on medium heat on your stove). Cook bacon just until crisp, remove bacon pieces and set aside (in a small bowl or something because you will need them later). Add the 1/4 cup of cooking oil to the goo left behind by the bacon in your skillet (or if you prefer we will call this a Dutch oven).

While the newly added oil is warming, combine the Flour, Salt, and Pepper in a bowl (not the one with the bacon in it, a different one). Toss beef cubes with the flour mixture to coat and place these in the Dutch Oven (unless you would rather call this a skillet, by now you get the idea). Cook the coated Beef cubes, Onions, and Garlic in the hot oil mixture until the beef is browned. Remove beef (with that slotted spoon mentioned earlier) and set aside (you guessed it, in a different bowl).

Drain off fat from the mixture still in the skillet (one of those grease mops dragged across the surface will do the trick, and I think Pampered Chef has these). Add Beef mixture back to skillet and simmer.

Using a small saucepan (with a tight fitting lid) heat the cognac VERY SLOWLY, you don't want it to catch on fire do you? When the Cognac is slightly warm to the touch (or taste) it is ready for the next step.

The Next Step:

Ok, maybe you do want to start a fire! Take the lids off the skillet and Cognac, this is where it gets interesting. Pick up the saucepan with one hand and the lighter with the other. Light the cognac, you will see a faint blue flame which is hot regardless of how it appears. Allow the flame to burn itself out, this will burn off the alcohol but leave the flavor. Pour burnt (not really burnt, it is the stuff you just lit on fire) cognac over beef mixture. Wait a few seconds and replace the lids on both pans (because the one you are holding might still flaming from the fumes), don't worry this is not as bad as it seems. Wait a few minutes and add the Burgundy, Beef Broth, and Bay Leaves to the Beef. Bring just to boiling stirring occasionally. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 1 hour or until meat is tender.

Add the carrots (cut them up first) and more onions if you want (sometimes I use the tiny onions or pearl onions but they are hard to find, otherwise screw it, there are enough flavors going on at this time). Cook 20 minutes more (this would be a good time to start the noodles). Add mushrooms (you might want to wash these first, and cut them in quarters too); cook 10 minutes more. Remove bay leaves. Stir in bacon pieces. Garnish with snipped parsley. Serve with hot, cooked noodles. Enjoy!